St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, Ohio

$2.00 January 25, 1991

COMMONWEAL

CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY ISSUE

ECUMENISM 1991
The Graymoor Prize
ED MARCINIAK & JOHN GINGER

THE EDITORS

WILL LATIN AMERICA BECOME PROTESTANT?
John A. Coleman

BOOKS
LEONARD FEIN on Marc H. Ellis
REMBERT G. WEAKLAND on Thomas Day
ROBERT P. IMBELLI on Joan Chittister
FANNY HOWE on A.S. Byatt
DENNIS O'BRIEN on Gary Wills
MARTIN E. MARTY on Christianity & Race
EDWARD S. SKILLIN on Theodore Hesburgh
LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM: Religious booknotes

COLUMNS & REVIEWS
JOHN GARVEY: 'Do you know Jesus?'
DAVID R. CARLIN, Jr.: World cop or world bully?
RICHARD ALLEVA • GERALD WEALES • FRANK McCONNELL

8
**********3-DIGIT 45
CW 00079972 9122
ST CHARLES SEMINARY
CARTHAGENA STA
LIBRARY
CELINA OH 45822

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

God bless us, every one!

Hempstead, N.Y.

To the Editors: As the year ends I must tell you that Emil Antonucci's "Are Toys Us?" [December 21, 1990] gives us the loveliest and most sensitive Christmas thoughts I've read in a long time....In fact, not since Dickens. Happy New Year! to all of you. ZOE L. BELTH

Wrong target

Eatontown, N.J.

To the Editors: I fully agree with the thoughts and reflections of Msgr. George G. Higgins ["Vatican Targets Weakland," December 7, 1990]. Great harm is done to the Catholic church when a wonderful and understanding man such as Archbishop Rembert Weakland is treated in a disgraceful way.

When we listen to other persons, three things can happen: (1) We may agree with *every*thing being said; (2) we may agree with *some* of what is said; (3) we may disagree altogether. Archbishop Weakland *listened* to the women of the Milwaukee archdiocese. Is that a sin?

The Vatican is wrong; a great many Catholics are not in the least confused about abortion. Do they think we are all callow?

GRACEMARY GUIDERA

Conformity & coercion

San Francisco, Calif.

To the Editors: In his thoughtful review of *No Turning Back* [December 21, 1990], Robert Hoyt goes too quickly past a point which requires explanation. He talks about intra-ecclesial questions concerning "the church's right to require silence or conformity from persons who are seen to speak on its behalf" and about "the import of religious vows." He calls these questions "endlessly arguable." I don't see why.

I don't think we should endlessly multiply "rights." We are talking here about moral discernment and an existing practice of requiring silence or conformity from certain people in the church under threat of certain penalties. There is a sense in which all the baptized speak on behalf of the church, especially when, in word or action, they proclaim the gospel. But nobody defends that scale of official control. Perhaps some argument could be made to defend these practices in regard to those people who are chosen to play public roles of official leadership in the community, that is, church officers. But religious women have none of the powers, pleasures, or prerogatives of official leadership. Could they have *only* the burden? It seems to me that all the good arguments are on the side of denying that religious women (or men, unless they are ordained) "speak on behalf of the church" in this sense.

One might argue that by taking these vows, a person enters into a state of life which is recognized, confirmed, and blessed by the church; but the same could be said for those in a Christian marriage. One might argue that at least religious are involved in a public apostolic ministry which is identified as Catholic; but the same could be said for the staff of *Commonweal*. Does the church have a right to require silence or conformity from married Catholics or *Commonweal* editors? But my point is more modest: Would Mr. Hoyt want to call such questions "endlessly arguable"?

ROBERT J. EGAN, S.J.

The author replies:

Well, no. Calling these questions "endlessly arguable" was a way of hurrying (or sliding) past what seemed to me secondary issues raised by *No Turning Back*, but I didn't want to imply that in my opinion the arguments for and against coerced conformity have equal merit. In fact, any argument between Father Egan and me on the matter would end quickly with a joint communiqué celebrating our solidarity. (Immediately thereafter, however, certain bystanders, also Catholic, would enter the discussion, and it would go on, and on, and on....) ROBERT G. HOYT

Women & the Gulf

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: There may have been more action by women and women's organizations with respect to the Persian Gulf crisis than Abigail McCarthy is aware of ["War, Gender, Silence," December 7, 1990].

Several weeks ago the Woman's National Democratic Club sent a letter to President George Bush supporting his efforts to mobilize world opinion against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait but urging him to talk rather than make war and to give more time for the embargo to do its work. We specifically suggested sending an emissary to Saddam Hussein to ensure there was no misunderstanding about our respective positions. Copies of this letter were sent to Democratic congressional leaders.

This is how our club operates. We communicate directly with those responsible for decision making on both foreign and domestic issues. Thus our views may not be known to the media. Indeed, when we do communicate our views to the media, they receive no publicity. This may also be the experience of other women's groups.

As for women in public life, be they leaders of their nations or opinion leaders at lower levels, they still must operate in

(Continued on page 78)

Commonweal, is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest and Book Review Index. Microfilm from Vol. 1, 1924, to current issues available through University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and on Microfiche from Bell & Howell, Wooster, Ohio 44691. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional offices. Copyright © 1991 Commonweal Foundation. Single Copy, $2. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $32; Canada, $34; foreign, $37. Special two-year rate: U.S., $57; Canada, $61; foreign, $67. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank.

Illustrations: Cover design, pp. 45, 48, 51, 57, Emil Antonucci; pp. 36, 71; Duncan, Punch; p. 61, Rita Corbin; pp. 64, 72, Paul Valerry; p. 66, Frank Cotham, p. 74, Jean Charlot.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMMONWEAL

CONTENTS

Volume CXVIII, Number 2

Correspondence	34
Editorials	35
Habitats of the heart: *William Aiken*	38
The politics of an exhibit: *Ilan Stavans*	39
'Do you know Jesus?': *John Garvey*	41
World cop or world bully?: *David R. Carlin, Jr.*	42
All ecumenism is local: *Ed Marciniak*	44
Defying gravity: *John Ginger*	44
Poetry: *Mary Rudbeck Stanko*	49
Marilee Richards, John Robert Quinn, Dixie Partridge	53
Screen: *Richard Alleva*	54
Stage: *Gerald Weales*	56
Media: *Frank McConnell*	57
Will Latin America become Protestant?: *John A. Coleman*	59

BOOKS

Beyond Innocence and Redemption: *Leonard Fein*	63
Why Catholics Can't Sing: *Rembert G. Weakland*	65
Wisdom Distilled from the Daily: *Robert P. Imbelli*	68
Possession: *Fanny Howe*	69
Under God: *Dennis O'Brien*	70
The Arrogance of Faith: *Martin E. Marty*	72
God, Country, Notre Dame: *Edward S. Skillin*	73
Religious booknotes: *Lawrence S. Cunningham*	74

STAFF

Editor: Margaret O'Brien Steinfels
Managing Editor: Patrick Jordan
Associate Editor: Paul Baumann
Production Editor: Patricia Mazzola
Senior Writer: Robert G. Hoyt
Advertising Manager: Ruth E. Taylor
Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

Commonweal, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly, except monthly Christmas, New Year's and July and August, by Commonweal Foundation, 15 Dutch St., New York, N.Y. 10038. Telephone: (212) 732-0800. Display advertising correspondence should be sent to Ruth E. Taylor, 11 Graffam Rd., So. Portland, Me. 04106 (207) 799-4387, classified advertising correspondence to 15 Dutch St. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Commonweal, 15 Dutch St. New York, N.Y. 10038.

The sweep of God's grace

If the separation of the churches is a source of perplexity, even scandal, for many Christians, it is often taken as proof of Christianity's falsity and failure by the skeptical. Christians profess love of neighbor and the unity of the church, and practice mutual suspicion and separation. How is this possible if Christians are indeed the beneficiaries of God's true revelation? Doesn't this disunity prove that Christianity is just another human project gone awry?

Given the maddening range of views and practices that various Christians have adopted in their attempts to understand and live the gospel, that is not an unfair question. But it often betrays a staggering ignorance of the edifying folly and scandal that St. Paul preached. Presumably Christians share at least a minimum of creedal consensus (but was Christ born of a virgin?) and ethical conviction (but is abortion a sin?). They want to know God and do the right thing. Perversely, however, the multiplicity of Christian denominations gives a great variety of answers to the question of how we know God (in an unmediated way, or sacramentally?) and how we are to discern virtue (individually, or under the guidance of the church?). Indeed, the spectrum of views often seems as great within denominations as across them.

This pluralism at-the-breaking-point came home to us with renewed poignancy as we read the sixty-five essays on ecumenism submitted for the Graymoor Prize. In this issue (pp. 44-52) our two winners, John Ginger and Ed Marciniak, bring invigorating news about the nature and progress of interreligious collaboration. Like the vast majority of essayists, Ginger and Marciniak strive to adumbrate the essential character of faith—that bedrock of spiritual yearning—that lies behind the external forms of religious institutions and practices. Marciniak describes a wide variety of religious activities in which people of all faiths, impatient with bureaucratic restrictions, are coming together to share a set of values and hopes. Ginger offers a more intimate portrait, tracing the arc of one man's passionate spiritual journey through faith's mysterious, perhaps circumstantial, manifestations.

As Ginger and Marciniak remind us, modern ecumenism has fostered many positive developments. Gone are the fear and suspicion that used to characterize the relationships among Christian denominations. Not long ago Catholics were forbidden to enter other churches or even read Protestant Bibles. Similarly, intermarriage, which was once strenuously discouraged, if not proscribed, is now more common. Perhaps as much as any other phenomenon, intermarriage has brought about a profound change in the practical relations between churches. Whatever the official rubrics or posture of a church, people in the pews seem to be working out ad hoc answers to questions of affiliation, participation, and practice.

These spontaneous gestures often appear distant from the stately minuets of ecclesiastical bodies, but official ecumenical endeavors have borne their own kind of fruit. The regathering of splintered groups of Lutherans, Methodists, and Presbyterians

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

into united churches is one outcome among American Protestants. Bilateral discussions between Catholics and Anglicans, Catholics and Orthodox, Catholics and Lutherans, Anglicans and Orthodox, Lutherans and Anglicans, and on and on, have clarified and in some cases dissolved the issues that once produced division: historically different understandings of faith, salvation, revelation, Eucharist, Petrine office, saints, and many more. Quite apart from healing historic wounds and long-range hopes of corporate reunity, these dialogues have been of significant theological value for the self-understanding of Christianity's separate branches, Catholicism not least. Long years of discussion between the Vatican and the World Council of Churches have yielded advances along with frank recognition of continuing barriers to unity. The straightforward assessments and honest caution of the recently published report of their Joint Working Group (WCC, 1990) dispel the common prejudice that fusty bureaucrats stand in the way of church unity. More than most, professional ecumenists understand that a strong sense of theological identity is critical if the search for Christian unity is not to end in a sentimental and false expression of community.

Amidst apparently endless and esoteric negotiations among official bodies, that critical insight frequently does not inform the ad hoc efforts of the people in the pews. If their sense of hospitality and tolerance can be said to be one of ecumenism's greatest achievements, it must also be admitted that this move forward has been accompanied by a certain dissolution, a certain loss of identity and coherence.

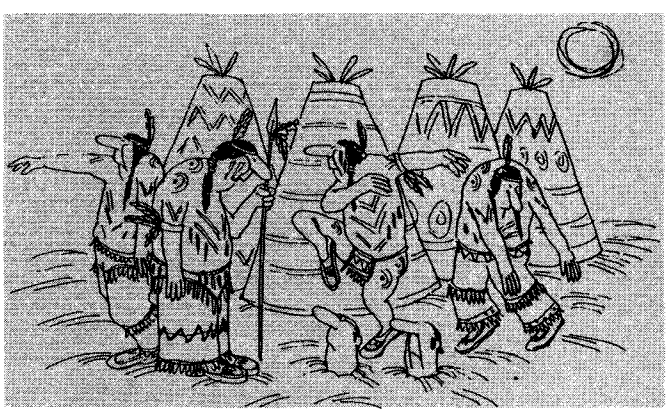
There is something very American in this. Every man his own church; the external and institutional don't matter; one opinion is as good as another. This, too, is part of the American creed. Emerson diluted with Donahue. Popular ecumenism prefers to "get beyond" differences rather than take them seriously. It seems to have little interest in doctrinal questions, ecclesiastical definitions, or the legitimate weight of tradition. Yet without attention to these matters what can be truly joined, for example, in the act of intercommunion, the great dividing line between the Orthodox, Protestant, and Catholic churches and the line that grassroots ecumenism may feel most compelled to cross in the name of hospitality and inclusiveness?

Writing in the *Tablet* (London, December 1, 1990), Timothy Radcliffe, an English Dominican, discussed this difficult and pressing question of intercommunion. The reality embodied and expressed in the celebration of the Eucharist is "not a community of the like-minded," he writes. Rather, it is "an attempt to bring to light, make visible...God's embrace." It has an objective meaning that transcends interior human dispositions or communal needs. Most important, Radcliffe goes on, the Eucharist is not principally an expression of table fellowship; it is also a wedding. We do not just commemorate the Last Supper of the historical Jesus—we encounter the Risen Lord. This sacramental relationship entails obligations, loyalties, and discriminations that go well beyond an inclusive hospitality. "To fail to do this [to fully explain this to those not in communion] would be condescending and patronizing.... Because sacraments are, of their nature, significant words and deeds, then one only cherishes them by searching to make clear and to live out their deepest meaning."

But the loss *of* identity that can spring from not taking differences seriously is matched by a loss *to* identity. The different theological stances, approaches to worship, and forms of ministry found in various strands of Christianity almost always represent, in emphatic form, elements that should have a place in the One Church Catholic. If they have seized the foreground in some branches, it was usually because they were pushed into the wings in others. By understanding and appreciating these differences in others rather than treating them as of no account, we can rediscover and nourish their remnants in ourselves.

The Friars of the Atonement instituted the Graymoor Prize hoping to encourage new thinking about ecumenism. And for good reason. Official ecumenism at times seems to move too cautiously and slowly, while popular ecumenism seems at times not simply to lack clarity on critical theological issues but to practice a form of tolerance that ends by being intolerant of distinctions.

Ecumenism has taught Catholics much about hospitality and the unrestricted sweep of God's grace. We had much to learn. But the popular assumption that differences don't matter robs us of an opportunity to rediscover submerged elements of our tradition. And if the idea that little of significance keeps Christians apart dulls our willingness to ask hard questions—as Radcliffe attempts—there may ultimately be little to keep us together.



"We're no longer into anything as structured as war dance. We're into free expression through movement."

THE IDES OF JANUARY

The vote has been taken, but the debate is not over. On Saturday, January 12, the House and Senate voted, in effect, to support a presidential decision to go to war against Iraq. As we write (January 15), war seems imminent. No alternative is apparent unless Saddam Hussein begins at the eleventh hour to withdraw his troops from Kuwait. We doubt he will. For this he bears the primary reponsibility for the tragedy to come.

George Bush could take a cue from the divided congressional vote and from the hesitation signaled by the American people. He could find a way to marshal a combination of threat and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

magnanimity while giving sanctions time to be decisively tested. We doubt he will. Having succeeded in imposing sanctions, he has lost faith in them. Having sent forces adequate to deter further aggression, he expanded the deployment and set a specific date. He reframed the issue as a test of will to use arms rather than a test of will to use patience. He redefined the kind of strength and sacrifice asked of America, so that America has had to choose between that definition and seeming to appease Saddam Hussein. For this he bears responsibility for making war likely.

Commonweal continues to believe that "the world has everything to gain, and Saddam Hussein much to lose, in giving the sanctions time" (editorial, January 11). Though their ultimate effectiveness was uncertain, the stakes are high enough to take that gamble. We disagree with those who believe that American will and coalition cohesiveness could not have been rallied for the long haul.

Although the vote of Congress has apparently made war legal, it has not necessarily made it moral—or sustainable. Our doubts about whether war has become truly the last resort and our grave uncertainty about the admittedly difficult assessment of proportionality between the good and harmful consequences leaves us on the side of persist and postpone.

If war comes, many of these uncertainties may disappear, but moral assessment must continue. If war comes, we cannot abandon the demand that moral restraints be observed and that the proportionality of the entire endeavor remains subject to judgment. We do not doubt Bush's resolve and his interest in a short and limited war. We do have grave concerns about his ability to calculate and quickly adjust to the unpredictable consequences that may come. God help him.

FRITZ EICHENBERG

For more than half a century, Fritz Eichenberg, the master wood engraver and graphics historian, would send an original illustration to friends, students, and associates at Christmas. The subjects ranged from ancient to self-created fables, from Lao-Tsu to Isaiah's peaceable kingdom, from St. Francis to a madonna of the boat people. Despite the universal scope, there was always but one elemental lesson: that in whatever any of us does, it is possible, indeed necessary, to draw light out of the hard, ink-like darkness.

This year and from now on there will be no such cards from Fritz Eichenberg. He died November 30 at the age of eighty-nine. But his images—particularly his classic illustrations of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, the Brontës, the Bible; of saints and great souls; of Christ in the poor and of the modern quest for self-destruction, all conceived by an Erasmian mind and executed by a Dürer's hand—will endure.

Eichenberg worked unrelentingly, gave of his craftsmanship generously, and never failed to challenge the earthly powers. He had to flee Germany in 1933 because of his anti-Hitler cartoons. When *Commonweal* asked him to do a drawing commemorating his friend Dorothy Day (November 29, 1985), he did so almost reflexively, picturing her as a young rebel. For over four decades, his woodblock prints graced the *Catholic Worker*, gratis, castigating injustice and war while nourishing the spirit.

But he did not limit himself to his medium. He imparted his unique, Quaker sacramentality not only in his images but as an instructor to generations of students at the New School, the Pratt Institute, and the University of Rhode Island; as a lecturer at home and abroad; as a visitor of prisoners; and as a writer, notably in his history, *The Art of the Print*; an autobiographical collection, *The Art of the Graver*; his jaunty children's books and contemporary fables with a twist; and several Pendle Hill pamphlets: *Art and Faith* and *Artist on the Witness Stand*. In these latter, he demonstrated the radicalness of a believing artist, the flinty rebelliousness that he combined with an uncommon gentlemanliness of soul. "In our fight against war and violence," he wrote to artists, "the arts should take their rightful place." And for half a century, his own work supported the efforts of various peace groups. "Whatever the follies of modern art may be," he observed, "we have helped to produce them....Let's face it. We have to mend our ways and try to bring order into chaos, piece the fragments together, become whole again, holy again."

Fritz Eichenberg's life proved that could be done. His legacy will endure to challenge our lethargy and inspire our humanity.

ET CETERA

BONS MOTS There are two classes of people, a philosopher once said: those who divide all people into two classes, and those who don't. Actually there are three: those who coin maxims and epigrams; those who spot these gems, steal them, and put them into anthologies; and those who raid the anthologies to spice up their speeches or fill space in periodicals. We hereby join the third class, having been tempted by the publication of *Just Good Reading*, an anthology of material from *The Critic*, (Thomas More Press, Kris Tuberty, ed.; $12.95, 312 pp.) The section that ignited larceny in our heart was a mini-anthology of items from "I Wish I'd Said That," a department presided over for many years by the late Dan Herr. In the spirit of John Kennedy, who never said, "To edit is to choose," let us begin:

Fred Allen: "Television is called a medium because it is rare that it is well done." *Joe E. Lewis*: "A friend in need is a pest." *G.K. Chesterton*: "It's not the world that's got so much worse but the news coverage that's got so much better." *Andy Warhol*: "Fame is when you market your aura." *Christopher Hampton*: "Asking a working writer what he thinks about critics is like asking a lamp-post how it feels about dogs." *François de Rochefoucauld*: "Why can we remember the tiniest detail that has happened to us and not remember how many times we have told it to the same person?" *Dan Jenkins*: "God invented football so grown boys would have something to do between wars." *Robert Heinlein*: "The acme of prose style is exemplified by that simple, graceful clause, 'Pay to the order of.'" *Conor Cruise*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

O'Brien: "An American Catholic is a Protestant who goes to Mass." *H.L. Mencken*: "The Latin church, which I find myself admiring more and more despite its frequent imbecilities, has always kept clearly before it that religion is not a syllogism but a poem." *James Thurber*: "He who hesitates is sometimes saved." *John C. Tully*: "If you want to find the most efficient way of doing something, give the job to the laziest person in your organization."

Footnote 1: John C. Tully founded the Thomas More Association and eventually put Dan Herr in charge of it.

Footnote 2: The selections above reflect the acerbic side of Dan Herr's wit [see "Curmudgeon, with Heart," *Commonweal*, October 26, 1990]. He had other sides, as shown by, e.g, *Thomas More*: "A merry story exchanged with a friend refreshes us much and without harm lightens our minds and restores our courage and soothes our stomachs."

Footnote 3: We don't think *The Critic* can sue us for stealing again what has been stolen so oft before. But, just in case, we'll mention that the whole of *Just Good Reading* is, indeed, ditto.

REPORT FROM THE ROOFTOP

HABITATS OF THE HEART

HAVE NAILS, WILL HAMMER

I have never wanted to be a "volunteer." To me there was something about the word that suggested energy without objective, or willingness without much wit. In addition, there was a brittle fellowship that didn't especially appeal to me in certain group-volunteer projects. A tinkling cheeriness bothers me.

But not long after I retired from teaching school, I began looking around for something to keep me busy. Since I had no particular skills, my opportunities were limited, but I had always enjoyed putting houses together, either from scratch or the long way back from general decay. In fact, my life had been one long confrontation with bursting pipes, rotting decks, and sagging floors. And to be honest, my relationship to pipe and sheetrock is caustic. In general, I carry a lot of grievances toward building materials.

There may be many people like me out there, veterans of their own private housing war, who have remodeled parts of their houses so many times they begin to have the air of ruins. As my family grew I moved the kitchen, put in a new bathroom, finished off the basement, enlarged and then demolished bedrooms. I built and rebuilt my house until there was no room for further error.

Although I still nail my Christmas tree to the living room floor, I am now generally free of remodeling necessities. My children are gone away. My grandchildren have no set ideas on the way a guest room should look.

To some it might appear that I have always been interested in low-cost housing, so when I heard that Habitat for Humanity, a low-cost housing organization, was looking for volunteers, it was only natural for me to grab my hammer and set out for the nearest building site, hoping to find a director of activities.

I preferred not to be called a "volunteer." I saw myself more as a knight errant, visiting buildings under siege, with screwdriver in hand rather than a sword. What I needed was an organization that could capture the quixotic element in me, some group that could accommodate young women who want hammers in their hands and old men who want to solder just one pipe before they pay up for past gaieties. (If I remember right, Don Quixote was in his fifties when he set out to rescue damsels in distress, and on a lower level some of us still get excited by drains in disrepair. You're allowed a folly in your fifties.)

Initially I was a little put out that no one was there at the building site to capitalize on my resourcefulness, but I saw the house needed housewrap, so I started in on that—during a snow squall with forty-mile-an-hour winds. That's the kind of thing I like to do. After a while a "community service" volunteer arrived, a carpenter, doing time on drug charges. We worked together for two weeks, putting up siding and exterior trim. Then he disappeared.

As time went by I met other people who were involved with Habitat, and I realized that no one was really in charge. This was truly a grassroots organization, with no direction from the mountaintop, just a bunch of consenting adults who were, in the restruck coin of the day, quixotically active. I soon came to think that Habitat must be one of the least proprietary organizations in existence. Despite the fact that it has over four hundred affiliates and has built over four thousand houses in the last fourteen years, there are no insiders, no charter members, no "ground floor" to the organization. Ground floors just seemed to be going up all over the New River Valley of Virginia, where I live. And although Jimmy Carter has been associated with the organization for the last eight years, there are no civil service tests to pass, no forms to fill out, no curious delving into backgrounds. You just show up and see what materials are on hand to build with. Such an organization was ideal for my eccentricities, providing a ramshackle structure out of which decent houses might emerge. And I saw room for nostalgia in my future, when I could look back on my building days. As the poet says:

Old houses were scaffolding once
and workmen whistling.

Habitat houses are better built than my house. They don't tilt four inches to the southwest the way my foundation tilts. There is no two-second delay before the message from the light switch arrives at the light itself. Their kitchen joists are not mere 2x6s which sag under appliances.

Working for Habitat involves abilities that many of us were forced to acquire in bitter circumstances early in our lives—nailing down shingles and siding, putting up partitions and gutters, mixing concrete and paint. After so long an apprenticeship, we now have the leisure to aspire to artistry. We may still occasionally joust with joists, but we do it on our own field. On a Habitat site one day an ex-professional baseball player, recovering from a stroke and stomach ulcers, lifted one end of a 4x12-foot piece

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of sheetrock and said, "This is what I'll be doing for the rest of my life."

Like me he had arrived at a final flakiness.

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit housing organization which builds houses for the inadequately sheltered. The houses (normally one thousand square feet—three bedrooms, bath, kitchen, dining/living area) are sold at no profit, and with a no-interest mortgage, to families who can afford $150 (Appalachia) or $250 (Cape Cod) a month for their housing. House payments are recycled within each local affiliate to build more houses. Recipient families are chosen on a nondiscriminatory basis, but they must be earning enough ($600 a month in Appalachia, $1000 a month on Cape Cod) to pay off the mortgage. They must also pledge a certain number of work hours either on their own house or on someone else's house. An average Habitat house in the United States costs $25,000, though prices range from $20,000 to $50,000, depending on land cost and materials. All the money is raised by private donation (no government funding) and 10 percent of the money in each locality goes to Habitat International, which builds houses in the third world, each of which costs about $2,500. The headquarters of the organization is in Americus, Georgia, but there are twelve regional centers throughout the United States, and affiliates in every state in the nation.

WILLIAM AIKEN

William Aiken's essays have appeared in many newspapers and magazines, including the Washington Post *and the* New York Times. *He lives in Blacksburg, Virginia.*

MEXICO'S SPLENDOR

THE POLITICS OF AN EXHIBIT

A PIECE OF HONEST HYPE

With all its Eurocentrism, every now and then the United States submerges itself in the pleasures of the third world. New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art recently exhibited an ambitious and expensive array of the arts and crafts from south of the Rio Grande, "Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries." At least fifteen New York galleries did variations on the same theme (woman painters, the young generation, etc.), while a variety of cultural institutions had readings and lectures by and about personalities, movements, and the styles of Mexico. Simultaneously, the Swedish Academy of Letters—after granting the 1989 Nobel Prize in Literature to the Spanish novelist Camilio José Cela—announced that the 1990 prize would go to Mexico's foremost intellectual, Octavio Paz. Paz, the poet and essayist, is the author of more than forty books, including the landmark *The Labyrinth of Solitude*. Not since Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiros, the three muralists invited to paint walls at Rockefeller Center in the 1930s, has there been such a craze for the United States' Aztec neighbor.

The aesthetic delights of "Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries," is so unique in its juxtaposition of Christian and Aztec motifs, so politically oriented, so revealing of the penury of those defeated by history, that the viewer is left with the feeling that it must have been a joke of God to place the United States and the millenarian Aztec descendants face-to-face. The gap dividing them is abysmal, uncrossable—which might not be good for diplomacy, but is a fascinating fact of life. The country of George Washington traces its past to the manners, constitution, and civility of England. It takes pride in having built an island of democracy, reason, and hope amid the turbulence of Western history. Mexico is just the opposite: An example of European dreams gone sour, a mix of races and manners, an instinctive society in which art, once controlled by the state, is now a tool of public relations. Let me explain.

The reasons are political. In the sixties and seventies Paz had been an outspoken critic of the regimes of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz and Luis Echeverria. When the student massacre of Tlatelolco Square took place in 1968, Paz renounced his post as Mexico's ambassador to India. Several years later, while he was the editor-in-chief of the literary magazine *Plural*, the Echeverria government took over the offices of *Excélsior*, the magazine's parent newspaper, and threw Paz and the entire staff into the street.

But his dislike for Mexican *realpolitik* oscillated in the eighties to a more complacent, submissive attitude toward the Partido Revolucionario Institutional (PRI), Mexico's ruling party for more than seventy years. Eventually Paz became a close friend of the current president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, whose whole political and economic program of openness and free markets is referred to as *Salinastroika*. He also built a relationship with Emilio Azcárraga, a millionaire who owns *Televisa*, Mexico's only private television corporation, and is the force behind *Univision*, the largest Spanish-speaking, mass-media chain in the United States.

The exhibit at the Metropolitan was largely paid for by Friends of the Arts of Mexico, a philanthropic institution that has Azcárraga as its chairman. The show was an amazing, unforgettable display of artistic energy, spanning from before the Conquest of Tenochtitlán in 1524-25 by the Spanish knights to the painter Frida Kahlo (1907-1954), who has acquired the stature of a popular idol she did not possess in her lifetime. Old and new masters of Mexican art, such as Jose María Estrada, Gerardo Murillo Cornadó (Dr. Atl), the three muralists mentioned previously, as well as Francisco Goitia and Rufino Tamayo, could be admired. The impressive catalogue that accompanied the show (*Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art—A Bulfinch Press Book, $75, 712 pp.), has been prodigally illustrated. It is not a synthesis, but the exhibit itself, handsomely bound. The catalogue examines furniture, engravings, trays, stamps, sculptures, ceramics, silver and golden gilts, embroidered silks, rare book editions, and clothing.

The views propounded in the volume are Paz's. It opens with his philosophical essay on the religious, social, political, and idiosyncratic roots of Mexican civilization. Those familiar with the poet's rhetoric will notice that most of his argument appeared

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Deepen Commitment Through Life-long Learning

Participate with us in a dynamic community of faith and learning at **Weston School of Theology,** a national **Jesuit** theological center. We invite the collaborative participation of lay and religious men and women, in the process of developing and enhancing their intellectual and practical skills in the service of today's Church.

Programs for a Life of Ministry

- Master of Divinity
- Master of Theology
- Master of Theological Studies
- Licentiate in Sacred Theology
- Sabbatical Renewal

We also offer:

- Renowned Faculty
- A Community of Faith
- Diverse Student Body
- Access to The Boston Theological Institute

Financial Aid is Available

For more information contact:

Rev. J. Frank Devine, SJ, Director of Admissions
Weston School of Theology
3 Phillips Place, Cambridge, MA 02138-3495
Telephone: (617) 492-1960

Weston School of Theology
A National Jesuit Theological Center in Cambridge, MA

in *The Arch and the Lure* and *The Philanthropic Ogre*, and in his many studies on Mexican art collected in 1987 in three volumes published by Fondo de Cultura Económica. (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich will publish Paz's *Convergences: Essays on Art and Literature* in March.) When comparing the visual legacies of his native soil and those of the United States, Paz claims that no two countries sharing one border could be more different. He examines the psychological implications of how Hernán Cortés and his Spanish conquerors mixed with the Indians, creating a new race, while the British Pilgrims in North America, loyal to their Puritan tradition, did not. Mexico's history is violent, repressive, and chaotic. The result is a confused collective identity, introspective and fearless of death, yet one eager to express itself in artistic terms. And that drive to communicate, that eternal need for self-definition, is what Paz calls the "will for form," a desire to leave a trace of the battles inside the soul.

This magnificent essay is followed by almost forty brief pieces by other scholars, each examining a particular theme of pre-Columbian, viceregal, nineteenth- or twentieth-century art. It is exceedingly well done. Yet for all its achievements, those on the northern side of the Rio Grande, enchanted with the display of exotic images, missed the struggle behind the curtains. In Mexico, both the exhibit and the volume were perceived as a diplomatic move, too costly for a country with the second largest foreign debt in Latin America. The rationale behind the production was clear, however. While President Salinas pushes his free-trade agreement with the United States and the Canadian governments, Azcárraga spends his extra money promoting Mexico abroad. Thus, the exhibit at the Metropolitan was more than just a display of the irrepressive "will for form." It was also a public relations gesture.

The amazing element in it all is that both the show and the catalogue took pride in presenting Mexico as a paradise of the exotic. Graphic statues of Jesus Christ showered in blood, Mayan and Olmec stone idols, bizarre jade amulets and other religious artifacts, the jocular cartoons of José Guadelupe Posada, and the suffering self-portraits of Frida Kahlo longing for Rivera, all of these images nurture the view of a superstitious country, at times barbaric and unscrupulous. Of course, that is the *true* Mexico. Yet one would think that the ultimate goal of this diplomatic art display would be to portray the southern neighbor as a friendly, civilized, and stable nation with a hopeful future. After all, that is the kind of Mexico the United States is looking for—not a Banana Republic, but a stable business partner. But neither the exhibit nor the catalogue was ready to falsify reality. Which means that, for as much as Mexico is anxious to show a new face, it wants to do it in honest terms. The true Mexican self is full of history, of a rich, multifaceted past. The friendship with the United States, Paz claims in his introduction, will only come out of mutual acceptance, not from false pretenses. Interesting public relations move, isn't it?

ILAN STAVANS

Ilan Stavans, a Mexican writer, teaches at Baruch College of The City University of New York. Among his latest books is a study of the Mexican detective novel.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OF SEVERAL MINDS John Garvey

'DO YOU KNOW JESUS?'

LET ME REPHRASE THAT QUESTION

There is a kind of Christian who challenges you with the question, "Have you met Jesus?" Or "Do you know Jesus?" It's an embarrassing question, and should be, since the answer for most of us, when the question is presented this way, would have to be "No." We have met ideas about Jesus, or stories about Jesus, and some of us claim that in the sacraments we encounter the living reality of Jesus, though it is far from clear what we mean by that, or what effect the encounter really has. But do we know Jesus, or have a true experience of his presence?

The question, so stated, demands a clear answer. I do know him—or I don't. I've met him—or I have little idea of what that might mean. Something makes us ashamed of a less than straightforward answer, and puts us at a disadvantage before the people who seem to be much more clear about all this than we honestly feel we can be. They act as if they were quite clear, quite unambiguously certain about their connection with Jesus.

Our response could be to wave away the question entirely, which would be a mistake, or to try to make it clear on our own terms, which would be another kind of mistake. The New Testament makes it apparent that we are meant to have an experience of the resurrection; we are meant to encounter the living Christ. The New Testament itself can be as embarrassing as the fundamentalist's probing question, but not necessarily because there is any continuity between them.

For most of us, if we were honest, the answer would be an ambiguous one: I do not *not* know Jesus. I have some connection with Jesus, however unclear it might be, however much it may exist at the level of yearning or hope. Recently I read *A Journey in Ladakh* (Houghton Mifflin, 1983) an interesting account of a young Englishman's journey to a place in India not far from the Tibetan border, where Tibetan Buddhism is lived and taught. The author, Lawrence Harvey, listens to an Indian businessman's description of the importance of being freed from false perceptions of the self, and then asks, "Have you felt what you are talking about?"

The answer is one that many people on many religious paths could give: "In moments. Enough to know that it is not nonsense. Not enough to live in constant awareness of its truth." Here there is a spirit close to that of the father who says to Jesus, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief." This also has something in common with Leon Bloy's famous statement: The one sadness is that we are not saints.

It is important to know, however, that this ambivalence is not in itself a bad thing, something to be rejected. Every element of spiritual understanding is important and valuable, including doubt and ambivalence. The people who passed a death sentence on Salman Rushdie probably haven't a shred of doubt; Torquemada might have been thoroughly, sincerely convinced of his rightness. There is an argument to be made for the case that fanaticism and false clarity are at their depths ways of masking doubt, and for many they may be. It is not only possible, however, but highly probable that many fanatics are unambiguously convinced that they are defenders of a truth which, for them, is quite unalloyed with doubt, and they are convinced that an orderly universe demands stamping out those who have not seen the light and who will not be converted.

It is an essential Christian teaching that the truth can be known. That implies that there can be a counterfeit truth, and a counterfeit knowing. The person in the hold of the counterfeit cannot, obviously, tell the difference; and no one but a serious disciple of Oscar Wilde would consciously prefer the counterfeit to the real, and then only to make some perverse but important point (which would put him into a relationship to the real once again).

This is all pretty obvious, but needs to be said because of the prevailing distrust of any certainty at all, any conviction that one's beliefs are grounded in a reality which can really be known and experienced. I am prepared to believe that some saints and mystics actually have encountered the reality of the risen Christ in a way I know I have not. I trust their testimony. But it is important not to counterfeit that certainty without their struggle, and the struggle will certainly involve the uncomfortable experience of ambiguity and uncertainty and doubt. The counterfeit can be attained, even after a counterfeit of struggle. The only way to avoid this trap is an acceptance of what cannot be known, a willingness to accept doubt as part of our movement toward God.

There is a tendency to rest at that point, to be comfortable with unknowing and doubt, and the culture reinforces it. There is the fact, though, that an experience of truth is what we are called to. The Indian businessman who speaks of having enough experience to know that "it is not nonsense" still struggles to live "in constant awareness" of the truth. To be comfortable with the position of unknowing is irreverent, a refusal to accept the challenge to move into a deeper experience—a little as if the oyster wore its bit of grit as an ornament and not the beginning of a pearl. It's easy for a believer, in a culture which at its higher levels professes to admire and even pursue ambiguity, to assert both a continuing membership in a religious community and yet remain comfortable with remaining in suspension, not really knowing what it all means. We are meant to know, and to grow toward that knowing.

The growth must be honest and unhurried, which means that it will contain large amounts of unknowing and doubt, and new doubts will surface along the way. There is an unknowing that Jesus himself apparently experienced—when at Gethsemane his soul was "filled with dismay and dread," when he begged for the trial to pass (as if there might be some uncertainty as to whether his death on the cross was inevitable), and when he said of the end of this world that no one, "not even the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Son," knows when it will occur. But there are other doubts as well, doubts we are more likely to experience: doubt that God is real, for example, or that the universe has any inherent meaning at all; and these may be coupled with a suspicion that our belief is a false consolation, a way of avoiding the autonomy of adulthood. To avoid those doubts or suppress them is to make them disproportionately powerful; and to be defensive about belief in the face of the most profound questions is never to grow into a belief worthy of encountering those questions.

One of the great religious strengths of Dostoevski's *The Brothers Karamazov*—setting aside its obvious strengths as one of the most powerful and moving novels ever written—is that it does deal with the most serious religious questions in an honorable way, unlike those forms of Christian propaganda that fail to take the major challenges to Christian belief seriously. (The novel is available now in a brilliant new translation, by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, from North Point Press.) Ivan Karamazov's objections to Christianity, offered in the chapter entitled "Rebellion," are among the best possible arguments for a moral rejection of the Christian idea of God. They are not answered by his brother Alyosha in a point-by-point way, with logical refutations. Instead, we are shown other things: the life of Father Zosima, the generosity of Alyosha's spirit, the power of compassion and repentance and forgiveness. These are in fact the only real answers or clues we get when we are faced with doubt.

We are not bound in any narrow way, even by the New Testament, in trying to see these things clearly. All of the Bible comes from the assumption that there is something that precedes, informs, and continues the living truth found in Scripture. It is not handed down from above, as has been pointed out by liberal and conservative scholars alike, but arises within a community. The fact that there was a Christian community for a couple of generations before there was a New Testament means that the New Testament alone cannot be considered absolutely normative for us. We believe that the Holy Spirit informs the community of Christians, allows it to discriminate, gives it the antennae that allow it to include the Epistles of Paul, the Gospels, even Revelation (which barely made it) in the canon, and exclude other writings whose way of talking about our relationship to God are less appropriate. It is at work among us now, and gives us—if we are attentive—a spirit of discernment that can look for signs of Christ's continuing presence among us.

What is wonderful in the work of such important Christian writers as Dostoevski (or Endo, in *Silence*) is that it shows that "knowing Jesus" comes from being able to see the continuing life of Christ among us where it is manifested—in suffering, in compassion, in forgiveness and forbearance. Apart from our encounters with God in sacrament and prayer, encounters which often confront us more with a sense of our own emptiness than the feeling of Christ's living presence (and this sense is itself a kind of mercy, a revelation), these are the places where we truly can say we know Jesus, and not in argument, or even in the most deeply felt conviction.

OF SEVERAL MINDS David R. Carlin, Jr.

WORLD COP OR WORLD BULLY?

THE GULF & OUR FUTURE

As far as I can see, writing during the second week of January 1991, there is only one really good reason for going to war against Iraq at the present moment. That's the reason the new kid in school has for beating someone up on the first day in the new school year. It quickly establishes the new kid's reputation. It makes sure no one will push him around. Indeed, it makes sure that he will be able to push others around should the need arise.

The United States is not exactly the new kid on the block. But we are entering a moment in history in which all the kids in the neighborhood, even the old and very familiar ones like the U.S., will have to redefine their roles. We are now in the post-cold war era, an era in which there will be only one superpower for many years to come, and the rules of the global game have to be rewritten. The most important of these new rules will have to govern that sole superpower, the U.S., just as the most important rules in civil society are those that govern the police power of the state. For it is the state that enforces the rules that govern the rest of society; and if anyone is to be the enforcer of law and order on a global scale in the decades to come, it will have to be the U.S., whether acting alone or, as in the Persian Gulf crisis, in conjunction with others.

If the U.S. quickly and decisively beats up Iraq, a tone for the new era will have been established. "Don't mess with the Americans" will be the message. "Don't call their bluff; they play for keeps." With a reputation of that sort, the U.S. will be able to enforce a high degree of international good conduct (good conduct, at least, as we define it) by rattling a few aircraft carriers from time to time.

But if there is this one good argument in favor of attacking Iraq right now, there are many arguments against such an attack.

(1) The attack is unnecessary. Given enough time, the blockade and embargo will defeat Iraq at far smaller a cost in money and lives than war.

(2) Even if it becomes necessary to attack at some later point, it is better to do so after the blockade and embargo have seriously weakened Iraq. If we can defeat them today, we can defeat them more easily six or twelve months from today.

(3) Support for the war in the U.S. is not strong to begin with; unless the war is brief and resoundingly victorious, what little support there is will quickly erode.

(4) Even if the war is brief, there will be little or no support for it among persons-in-the-street in most of the Arab world.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And if the war does not end quickly, Arab public sentiment will explode—who knows with what consequences? Will friendly Arab governments be able to remain friendly in the future? Will these governments even remain in place in the future?

(5) Besides all this there is the law of unanticipated consequences, which is always at work in history, but seems to work overtime during wars. Who knew, for instance, that the bullet at Sarajevo would lead to the Bolshevik revolution in Russia little more than three years later?

Should we therefore reject the role of global police officer which history seems about to thrust upon us? By no means. The world badly needs a force that can maintain international law and order, and if the U.S. refuses to fill that role there is no one who can pinch-hit for us. This is not to say, of course, that we should do it alone; it is much better that we be the head cop than that we be the sole cop. As much as possible we should follow the splendid example George Bush has set during the Persian Gulf crisis: We should win a United Nations mandate before exercising whatever police functions may come our way from time to time.

It goes without saying that there are grave dangers connected with playing the policeman role, the gravest of which is that we may lose our national soul. There is much truth in the old maxim that power tends to corrupt; the world's top cop may eventually turn into the world's top bully, a misfortune for both the world and the cop, and perhaps more for the latter than for the former.

But abuse is not the only sin connected with power; in certain circumstances refusal of power can also be a sin. For better or worse, the U.S. is a large, rich, powerful nation. There is no sense wishing that we were Sweden or Switzerland or Singapore. There is no point aspiring to the virtues that would do credit to a small, industrious, mind-your-own-business kind of country. We have to cultivate a different set of collective virtues. After three-quarters of a century of global hot wars and cold war, after a protracted battle royal among the world's leading nations, the U.S. is the only great power left standing. We did not win only the cold war. We won the great struggle that dominated the twentieth century, beginning in August 1914, and ending with the emancipation of Eastern Europe from Communism in 1989-90. Unlike prizefighters, who would do well to go into retirement immediately upon winning the title, thereby preserving what is left of their brains, great nations do not have the right to retire the morning after victory.

One of the great risks involved in President Bush's plan to attack Iraq is that if the attack does not quickly succeed, if the war drags on and on, then public opinion in the U.S. may recoil not only from this particular war but from the whole idea of America-as-policeman. If this happens, then the attempt to stand up for international law and order in a critical region of the world will have jeopardized law and order for the indefinite future; for once the U.S. packs up its sabers and goes home, there will be no one capable of filling the vacuum we have left behind.

In the long run the most important task George Bush has to accomplish in the Persian Gulf is not to get Iraq out of Kuwait but to use this crisis as an occasion for redefining America's post-cold war role in the world. To this end, it is vital that we defeat Iraq. But it is not essential that we defeat Iraq in a great armed struggle; capitulation after a long siege will do just as well. In fact, it will do better, since it does not run the grave risks involved in armed conflict. And the great juvenile delinquents who run certain nations will understand that the cop who waits you out is just as much to be feared as the cop who hits you over the head with his billy club. □

Thought

A Review of Culture and Idea

THE SESQUICENTENNIAL EDITION

Léon Brunschvicg's Religion of the Spirit	ANDRÉ BREMOND
The Psychology of Classical Training	JAIME CASTIELLO
Przywara's *Analogia Entis*	JAMES COLLINS
The Form of Inference	BERNARD LONERGAN
A Maritain Anthology on Art and Poetry	JACQUES MARITAIN
Ascent to Truth	THOMAS MERTON
The Problem of Pluralism in America	JOHN COURTNEY MURRAY
Cosmogony and Knowledge: I. St. Thomas and Plato	ANTON C. PEGIS
Symbol as Need	WALKER PERCY
Theology and the Arts	KARL RAHNER
Modern Aesthetics and the Poetry of the Divine Comedy	DON LUIGI STURZO
The Achievement of Henri De Lubac	HANS URS VON BALTHASAR
The World Crisis and Human Personality	DIETRICH VON HILDEBRAND

Available by individual copy—$10.00 each.
Send check payable to THOUGHT to:
THOUGHT
Fordham University
Bronx, NY 10458

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE ECUMENICAL TASK: 1991

ED MARCINIAK

ALL ECUMENISM IS LOCAL

When ecumenism graces a conversation, images reel across my mind, but not those of the World Council of Churches, the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, Vatican II's *Decree on Ecumenism*, or the many Anglican-Roman Catholic commissions. These initiatives, official ecumenism at its best, are staffed by high-level negotiators searching for reconciliation. Their agendas are mostly ecclesial, dogmatic, and historical. These are circles in which I have not traveled, only observed from afar.

My ecumenical recollections, in contrast, take me back to personal experiences, irenic events both vivid and unforgettable. As a Christian of the Catholic variety, I single out eight such remembrances from the hundreds that have sculpted my vision of unity among Christians.

- Attending the ceremony installing the new president of Chicago's Catholic Theological Union. The event took place in a Jewish temple before the Ark and beneath a large tablet representing Moses' Ten Commandments.
- Watching two boys carrying the offertory gifts of bread and wine to the altar during the Sunday Eucharist at my parish church. They wore windbreaker jackets, the backs of which were emblazoned prominently with the words "North Shore Baptist Church" where they had been enrolled in a summer day camp and Bible school.
- Hearing an Anglican priest, during the eucharistic prayer of the Mass he was celebrating in a small chapel, invoke the name of "Our Holy Father, John Paul II."
- Detouring, while on vacation, to Christ Lutheran Church in Spring Green, Wisconsin, after discovering that because of a fire the local Catholic church had been invited to hold its Sunday liturgy there. Since my wife and I arrived too late for the Mass, we stayed for the Lutheran service, joined the congregation in reciting the Nicene Creed, Psalm 66, and the Lord's Prayer, noted the Catholic Sunday missalettes in the pew and contributed to the offertory collection.

(Continued on page 48)

ED MARCINIAK *is president of the Institute of Urban Life and a member of the Catholic-Jewish Dialogue Group, both in Chicago.*

JOHN GINGER

DEFYING GRAVITY

"Did you know that Moses wore a wig?" my barber asks. I don't. "Well, sometimes he was with Aaron [which he pronounced "air-on"], and sometimes without!"

Having revealed widening open spaces on my scalp, he replaces his mirror on its hook. Our amusement embraces the frightfulness of the pun, my declared intention to age gracefully, and the fact that Michael relies on me to have read the Bible. He is Christadelphian, I Roman Catholic.

The floor of the salon sags alarmingly. We are in a market town in the west of England. This timber-frame with its infilling of wattle and daub behind a respectable coating of plaster was assembled at about the time of the first Pilgrim sailings to the New World. Its foundations include stone pillaged from the Benedictine abbey suppressed less than a century earlier. I share the sadness that these premises, like my hair, are scheduled to disappear soon. Not even the conservation lobby can deny that dry rot has won the day. This pleasant low-ceilinged room overlooking the surviving abbey gatehouse will disappear. Michael and his pretty young wife in the adjacent ladies' salon are to be rehoused.

The shared threat has spilled over into other recognitions—an alliance renewed once a month on the grounds of certain assumptions, beliefs, decencies to which we trust one another to subscribe.

"You know I take everything in the Bible *literally*?" Michael says.

This afternoon there has been an elaborate story of archaeological discovery, the question of Adam's supposedly uncorrupt body, and a tricky point with regard to an umbilical cord. I have distanced myself comfortably from those nineteenth-century Christians who made such heavy weather of this kind of thing. Now, as Michael gives me my change, I am brought up short. His argument for biblical inerrancy is a declaration, a political statement of intent: *this far and no further*. I know this man well enough to suspect that, more than usually, his work is a means to an end. The vocation is in the good will, the geniality,

JOHN GINGER, *a writer and lecturer on English literature, lives in Beckford, England.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the kindness; he has told me about his fund-raising activities, and I have seen the neat, modern church—raised largely as a result of his own efforts—where he regularly teaches Sunday school. From this source, *literally* has the force of revelation. Fundamentalism can no longer be dismissed with a mocking glance at Bishop Usher and a universe that materialized on an autumn afternoon in B.C. 4004. Is this, perhaps, a valid approach after all: the mind firmly partitioned—on one side Einstein, quantum mechanics, space probes; on the other a scriptural inheritance to be kept intact for fear of mislaying the pearl without price? Michael's demarcation of territory forces me to ask myself what part fundamentalism has played in my own life—as a youthful member of the Church of England; as a balding Catholic (I read biblical criticism; but the imagery that stimulates prayer as like as not misses the respectability that scholarship confers).

Michael's preparations to leave his crumbling, unrestorable premises coincide with the final stages of my work on a biography of a friend who died in 1985, missing his century by six years. It has been a lengthy process of collating personal recollections, letters, impressions from friends and colleagues, an outspoken, self-critical memoir, and my own research into the background of a life that had begun in a Strict Baptist enclave seven months after the death of John Henry Newman and ended in a friar's "cell" close to the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome.

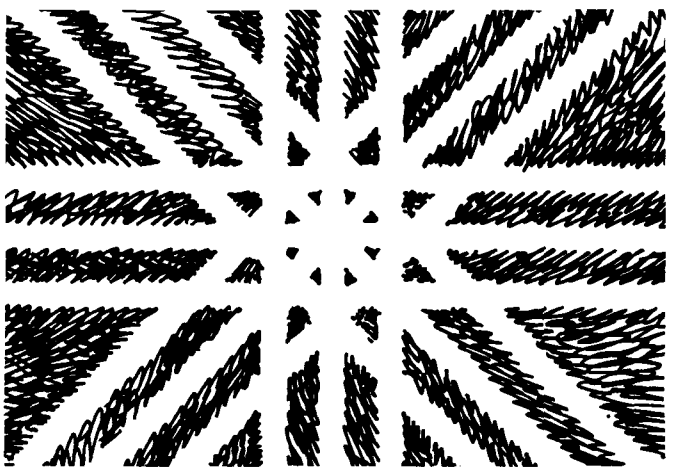
What had been significant to my friend as he reviewed his long life? What was significant to me? Knowing him as a man, who, at the age of eighty-six, had confessed ruefully to "preaching three sermons in five minutes" to a virtual stranger, it was exciting for the biographer to discover that at the age of fourteen Reggie Lawson had regularly taken his stand with other "Apostles of the King's Highway" to proclaim the gospel on a London street corner not far from the present Regent's Park mosque. For Reggie himself, a more significant memory had been sitting, at the age of twenty-four, in his Honorable Artillery Company uniform behind the lines of the Ypres salient in the refectory of the convent in which he and other stretcher-bearers were billeted; public and private events had taken away his certainties; he watched the nuns at the other end of the room, noticing that they sometimes wept over their work.

It was tempting to treat Reggie Lawson's friendship with Mother Josephine, their correspondence, his reception into the Catholic church in 1922 and eventual adoption of the religious life as a triumph story—*all roads lead to Rome*. But to the protagonist it had been a matter of rescue: a life that had become a tug of war between idealism and compulsion; the heroic surgery resorted to when a traumatized adolescence had sapped the energies that might normally have been expected to resolve the conflict. He came to Catholicism in search of a father—of authority. To a bystander his life in the church seemed to revolve round the steady application of a strong will to learning the art of love.

There were ironies to provide some scaffolding for the story. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century his grandfather, a Calvinist minister, had wielded almost single-handed that flail of the orthodox, the *Protestant Echo*, a weekly chronicle of the sins of Canterbury and Rome. At one level, Catholicism remained for Reggie the sign of a release into a wider culture from the subjectivism and soul-searching that, as a young man, had brought him to the edge of despair.

At a deeper level there was no divide. As a boy he had annotated his Bible in inks of three different colors, tracing the references to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. When I inherited his battered Jerusalem Bible I found it written over in the waveringly flexible italic of the artist *manqué*: one could follow the track of his enthusiasms—the Gospel and Epistle of John, Deutero-Isaiah, the Wisdom literature, the Psalms, the song of Hannah in I Samuel, of Azariah in Daniel, David's hymn of praise in I Chronicles, the concluding chapter of Hosea, Romans, and Corinthians, the Epistle to the Hebrews. He had known these since the time when he persuaded his family and the elders of the Mount Zion Chapel to allow him to proceed to adult baptism and full membership of their community at the early age of thirteen. There were no grounds here for seeing his approach to Catholicism as a journey from darkness into light.

As a Dominican lay brother—in his thirties he had resisted his superiors' promptings to become a priest—he continued to wear his black and white habit in the streets of Rome when most of his confreres were abandoning theirs. No false piety in this, though there may have been a mild exhibitionism: he enjoyed, or perhaps saw as a vocation, the encounters his "uniform" brought him. Above all, the habit was the badge of a discipline that had brought him freedom. He drove himself hard, in his manual work (keeping the door, serving in refectory and sacristy, cleaning rooms and corridors), in the shepherding of his "pilgrims" around Rome (he had become a tireless and inspiring cicerone), and in the leisure hours that he devoted to prayer, letter writing, and reading. He had a voracious appetite for the



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

flavor of the month—Maritain, Teilhard, Simone Weil, the poetry of Eliot or Berryman. Racier things were passed on to him by departing visitors: a subsequent, staider pilgrim might look askance at the paperback that had just been pushed into his hand—*I'm O.K., You're O.K., Mister God This Is Anna....*

The authors, like their varying styles and opinions, were ultimately dispensable: means to an end. There was a certain ruthlessness about this reader, avid for anything—be it Catholic, Protestant, Sufi, or Buddhist—that would set the nerves of his personal mysticism vibrating. He discovered Kierkegaard. In the summer of 1971, he wrote:

> I was overshadowed in the tram and an eerie voice said, "Why do you read Protestant theology?" It was the voice of a dear old priest, who was not at all consoled when I replied that it was Christian philosophy based on Catholic theology!

He had joined his order at the age of forty, and with his eyes open: there were to be no regrets. The New Wave of the sixties was bonus, not release. The excitement of living on the very edge of Vatican Council II spilled into his letters:

> Since the beginning of May we have had a spate of visitors including four Anglicans. One of them, Canon Rea of Chichester Theological College, had a private audience. He showed the Holy Father his Roman breviary, with an *imaginetto* of the pope inside. "But," said the pope, "your breviary is very old. I have two copies, may I offer you one of them?" And he gave the canon a complete set of three, inscribed with his name, and containing several personal souvenirs, such as his nephew's ordination card.

That, for Brother David (as he had become) was one symptom of grace. Another, by which he set much store in his last years, was the "agape"—his name for the, at first informal, reunion of friends and visitors who had passed through his hands in Rome (it took place, usually in or near London, every other year in the course of his home leave). At first glance these might have seemed worldly occasions—the guests an assortment of Catholics, Anglicans, and "honest enquirers," the conversation never dull, and in the vicinity of David, frequently paradoxical. He must have known the advice given to the church leaders of Colossus, "Be tactful with those who are not Christians....Talk to them agreeably and with a flavor of wit" (Col. 4:6). He saved his small weekly allowance to buy a present for each of the guests: a plastic replica of columns from the Roman Forum (they illustrated the theory of the Golden Rule and the proportions of Beauty); a postcard of Michelangelo's Adam with a poem written for the occasion, typed, and pasted onto the back. One left with the conviction that, whatever it meant for oneself, for Brother David this had been a Christian love-feast.

In August 1977, at the largest of the "agapes"—a room had been hired in a hotel near Piccadilly Circus—the family appeared in force. He was the youngest of five children and had remained, at long distance, a devoted family man, weathering the incomprehension that had greeted his conversion to Catholicism. One brother had lapsed from the faith, another had become a theosophist. David's surviving sister, Lily, remained within the Strict Baptist tradition and perhaps by sheer example kept a bevy of descendants within it. In the opinion of an agnostic cousin, the economist Lionel Robbins, she was the saint of the family. When the (Catholic) host of another "agape" died suddenly in his mid-forties, a friendship developed between the widow and a missionary daughter of Lily's.

In the margin of his Bible, against Ephesians 1: 10-11 ("...that he would bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth"), David wrote, *ECUMENICAL—grand style*. I wonder if it had been marked as a contribution for one of the Pentecostal meetings that, throughout the seventies, he attended on Sunday afternoons in a hall belonging to the Gregorian University? Not all his friends shared his enthusiasm for the charismatic movement, but in the terms of this life it was a striking demonstration of a wheel that came full circle.

He approached this group of a hundred or so English-speaking "religious" with some dread ("I've now led them twice," he wrote in 1980; "it was like death...walking on the water") but a sense of homecoming could be felt in his enthusiastic response to its young leadership. He had never seen his baptism by complete immersion at the age of thirteen as less than an opening of the floodgates of joy, and had written movingly about it in his memoir:

> I asked for prayers from a beggar-man who was a well-known figure in Hampstead, sitting on a seat by St. Stephen's church selling matches, and from the flower-women selling flowers on Rosslyn Hill. The women were strangely moved and told me rather shyly that they were Roman Catholics but that they would pray for me "all the same." The match-seller, who was noted for the whiteness of his beard and for his gentle manners, asked if he might come to the ceremony of my "new birth" to see with his own eyes *my being born again*.
>
> I remember being completely passive in the minister's hands; and the symbolism of the elements, the water, and the words "I baptize thee, Reginald, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" entered my soul. The world seemed a new place of innocence and hope, and I thought that I understood perfectly the old match-seller's remark.

Now, at the age of eighty he offered himself for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit when a group of young men and women performed the laying-on-of-hands. At the deepest level of community and charity there could not have been much to choose between the Dorset Square Baptists of 1904 who came to congratulate the neophyte in his damp blue tunic and the religious of Rome

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who took the wiry, stooped little lay brother to their hearts. There was a quality—a grace—in people that he recognized, whether it came in orthodox or non-conformist garb. He remembered that on the day of his reception into the Catholic church it was a Jewish friend, unaware of the morning's events, who exclaimed, "What's up? You look as if you've fallen in love!"

Ecumenism demands public acts—the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission's Declaration on the Eucharist; Karl Barth's severing of the knot of the faith/works controversy in *The Epistle to the Romans*; a march through Paris to protest against the desecration of Jewish graves. In my own diocese people of the major Christian denominations have come together and pooled their resources as either voluntary teachers or adult students in an evening education project, "Framework for Faith." This is a combination of the public and the private, and the latter sphere may be the more important. We will either make new friends on ecumenical ground or retreat into the certainties of older friendships, older allegiances, the claustrophobic comfort of "knowing that *we* are right," ignoring St. Paul's own concept of the Christian way: "I forget the past and I strain ahead for what is still to come" (Phil. 3:13).

Making a new friend is sensing the quality of a life. As the friendship deepens we are alerted to the areas where temperament and ideas fuse and others where they remain distinct. Ecumenism may be a walking forward into a forest, one's eyes probing the gloom; but one is in company.

Darkness is a potent symbol of religious encounter. Could that grey area where ideas and lives are less than perfectly fused be seen as the penumbra of a deeper shadow, a central, unjettisonable belief: a faith, a core of resonant blackness in each one of us? (Mysticism has other symbols than those of light.) At moments of encounter and discovery when these are found to coincide, a burden of polemics and prejudice falls away. Perhaps ecumenism should be less concerned with the arguments and readjustments that are permissible in the outlying areas of the penumbra than with recognition, in trust and confidence, of each other's vibrant and regenerative "hearts of darkness."

Michael, my Christadelphian barber, has had a difficult moment at home. His son and some schoolfriends are watching science fiction on television. The dialogue is racy. Casually, the Holy Name is abused. Should this be tolerated in Michael's Christian home? He waits until the fourth repetition of the offense and then disconnects the set. His affection for his son and his awareness of the social tensions of the scene are clear from the way

Princeton Seminary: A Community of Friends

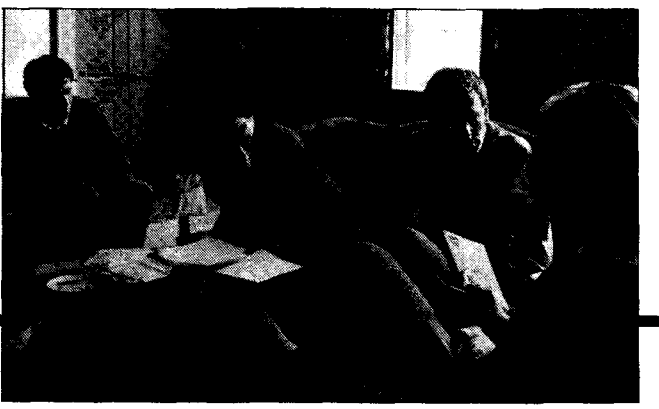
Princeton Seminary is a community of scholars and believers — men and women who take their Christian faith and calling seriously and who bring their minds and their prayers to bear on important spiritual and social issues that engage our world.

It is also a community of friends.

If you believe you are called to ministry, we invite you to join hundreds of men and women from across the nation and around the world who have come to Princeton. When you graduate, many of them will be lifetime friends who will sustain you in your ministry.

For information about application contact:
The Director of Vocations and Admissions
Princeton Theological Seminary
CN 821, Princeton, NJ 08542-0803
(1-800-622-6767)

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Where scholars are believers and believers are scholars.

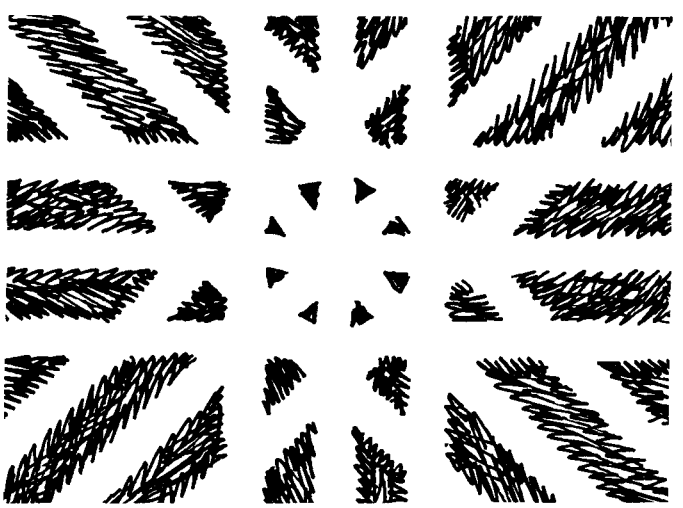


LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he describes the incident, and from the hint of a question mark still hovering above it. Childless myself, I give him the verbal support he wants, hoping that I, too, would have had the courage of my convictions. I know by now, having done my research, that Christadelphians are exclusive, would confine our Lord's promise of salvation to members of their own cult. I remember that, the first time I sat in this chair, my own declaration of religious allegiance was received in silence, and am left to wonder if the images it produces are of Inquisition torture chambers and Smithfield burnings—scenes from those slide-shows I watched in the fifties as a member of a Protestant youth group. Yet all this seems irrelevant when the matter at hand is children and TV or Michael's pleased discovery that I have sufficient knowledge of the Bible to be a relatively informed outlet for his gags.

I think of retaliating and trying out on him a slightly lurid piece of street-corner evangelism—a poor thing but my own. In his son's sci-fi film the emphasis will have been, rightly, on the gleaming spaceship, the weightless trajectory, the cathedral-high rocket that achieved this defiance of gravity. But there's another side to it: Something we see briefly between the shots of the gleaming spire and the control-room computers racheting to count-down: the rocket's placenta, the gantry of steel girders and hoses puffing spurts of angry steam, an edifice in itself, a giant Beaubourg yet, finally, no more than a means to an end, so much discardable scaffolding tethered to earth.

Would he accept that picture as a symbol, not perhaps of Christ's church, but of so much that in any one life represents religious formation—our inspirations, our misroutings , our mentors, our controversies, our prejudices, as seen from that unimaginable location, "space"? Religion is by definition otherworldly. In the darkness we stare forward in search of the infinitely distant point. Perhaps even as we aspire we should admit the basis in pure chance (of being born at this time or in that place) of the support systems whose only—and ultimately discardable—function is to launch.



ALL ECUMENISM IS LOCAL

(Continued from page 44)

- Commemorating the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's birth at a Lutheran-Catholic service in Chicago's Holy Name Cathedral where the homilist was none other than Dr. Martin E. Marty, the pride and joy of most American Lutherans.
- Listening to a friend from Baltimore, who once supervised the Sunday nursery at Messiah Lutheran Church, explain her encounter with ecumenism: "One year I noticed more and more strange preschoolers in the nursery. Who were they? I soon discovered that the new kids had been dropped off by parents on their way to Mass at the local Catholic church."
- Viewing the television presentation of Archbishop John May of St. Louis greeting twenty-five hundred Lutherans assembled in the Catholic cathedral to celebrate the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and opening with these words: "*Mi casa, su casa.*"
- Congratulating a Catholic colleague who had been named president of the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago, the largest YMCA in the world. He recalled that only two decades earlier he and other Catholics had been warned from the pulpit not to join the YMCA.

These experiences and similar ones enjoyed by friends and neighbors point to an ecumenism radically different from official interchurch commissions and the like. My purpose is to highlight the importance of other ecumenical encounters, like the eight recounted above. Experiences like these are less cerebral, highly personal, less clerical, and spreading rapidly. As they multiply, they go beyond official ecumenism to broaden the ecumenical movement's base and accelerate its progress. Will they be absorbed into the ecumenical movement by those who have been appointed to shepherd it?

Official Ecumenism When these examples of personal ecumenism are ignored and attention centered only on authorized dialogue, ambiguity begins to cloud assessments of the contemporary status of ecumenism. Discouragement sets in for the participants in official consultations. The infectious optimism of the 1960s, fed by Vatican II, succumbs to the disquieting pessimism of the 1990s. The late Thaddeus D. Horgan, S.A., reported on the changing attitude toward official ecumenical give-and-take in 1988 when he was associate director of the National Council of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs. He wrote that "the ecumenical movement has become noticeably quieter. This is evidenced by some leading theologians, Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox, who have publicly commented that ecumenism has come to a standstill. They feel a certain impatience with the seeming slowness with which various church authorities are dealing with the results of nearly twenty years of fruitful and successful interchurch dialogue."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Earlier, in 1985, even more discouraging words came from Kenneth Briggs, former religion writer for the *New York Times*: "A few days ago I read about another one of those headlined 'steps' toward Christian unity....The problem is that these steps seem to be going in circles. With each impressive ecumenical document, the goal seems ever more elusive. If recent history is a sound guide, the Anglican and Catholic theologians will send their victorious findings on to church authorities and settle back to twiddle their thumbs for a good long while, perhaps forever. The august-sounding Second Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission will probably see its worthy handiwork sink into ecclesiastical quagmire."

As the tide of enthusiasm ebbs for top-level negotiations between ambassadors representing different churches, a new realism surfaces with regard to the efficacy and speed of bilateral commissions and canonical dialogues. Recent and historic exchanges will, it now seems, continue to stumble along as they have with the Orthodox since Constantinople in 1054, with Protestants since Augsburg in 1517, and with the Polish National Catholic Church since Scranton in 1900. In the meantime, other ecumenical approaches beg for re-examination. Many of them have overcome theological hurdles that were once thought to be insurmountable.

Institutional Ecumenism What then sustains the ecumenical movement today and buoys its hopes for improved interchurch relations? What keeps twenty-first century ecumenists busy and on track? It is the conviction, amazingly successful in practice, that separated Christians should do everything together except what conscience demands that they do apart. That conviction takes the form of institutional ecumenism that occurs in religious organizations that have opened their doors and hearts—or membership—to women and men from other persuasions. Through practical cooperation at the local institutional level and through joint witness on behalf of the poor and powerless, authentic ecumenism advances. Horgan, a sturdy supporter of institutionalized ecumenism, wrote: "Throughout the United States ecumenism is taken for granted. Civil celebrations have an ecumenical and/or interreligious flavor. Most social programs, whether shelters or soup kitchens for the homeless in our cities...or assistance and referral services for troubled farmers in rural America, are ecumenical (inter-Christian) or interreligious (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu)...."

We have come a long way in the United States since 1910, the year when a worldwide Week of Prayer for Christian Unity had its beginnings. Since that time, thousands of models of institutional ecumenism have come into being, many solidly established. These institutionalized developments bring joy and new promise to the beleaguered ecumenists who serve on official interchurch commissions. Consider these scattered examples from the United States alone.

Protestants and Catholics once clung possessively to their own Bibles and were urgently discouraged or forbidden to read the others. At the present time, a dozen or more English editions are read and studied jointly by Christians without regard to denomination. Furthermore, the American Bible Society, whose historical ethos has largely been Evangelical Protestant, appointed a Catholic Texan as general secretary. Not many years ago Martin E. Marty served as president of the American Catholic Historical Association. Increasingly, religious publishing houses have become ecumenical in their marketing and their choice of authors.

Christians pray together more frequently and not just on Thanksgiving Day, which is slowly becoming the nation's first ecumenical holy day of nonobligation. They also pray together at retreats, on Martin Luther King Day, and in ecumenical prayer services such as the one held in 1987 in South Carolina where Pope John Paul II preached. Altos and tenors in church choirs are often ecumenically diverse, as are the organists. In the Peoria diocese, where more than fifteen thousand persons have made a *Cursillo* during the past decade, 25 percent of the *Cursillistas* were Christians other than Catholics.

The staff and students of many educational institutions have become ecumenically diverse. (At the Harvard and Chicago divin-

Mary Rudbeck Stanko

Transition

The ice is a frozen tomb of memories
where, at a glance, I can see my ancestors
smiling reflectively and affectionately
up at my shoes, watching me as I whistle
and hold onto the air for balance. I want
the snow to fall enough to make a foothold,
to cover the necessary sense of mortality
which makes me more alert then I would like
to be; I'd rather drag my heels on solid
ground, lazily gripping the soil which joins
me with the march of seasons, not eternities.
But still the ice says yes, and calls me
to its comely hues and hard realities; I fall
to it and embrace even the beginning when I
was born before the fish came, before warmth
made my body strong enough to crawl ashore
and wait for the cold and lasting winter.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ity schools, for example, Roman Catholics comprise the largest single group in the student body.) Across the nation, in hundreds of Catholic schools serving innercity neighborhoods, the student populations are predominantly black and not Catholic. Catholics teach in Lutheran elementary schools, while Evangelicals, Lutherans, or Episcopalians, returning the favor, often preside in Catholic classrooms. Nationwide, hundreds of buildings once used as Catholic parochial schools now house private schools, many of them under other religious auspices.

In my neighborhood in Chicago, institutional ecumenism is no longer a surprise. For example, a Catholic, the office secretary for many years in the rectory of my parish church, now performs the same duties for the local Presbyterian church, three blocks away. In Immanuel Lutheran church there stands a statue of Pope John XXIII, whose attitude, sensitivity, and compassion, not so much his theology, turned him into this century's most influential docent of ecumenism. Finally, at Loyola University nearby, classes are held on the feasts of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, holy days of obligation, while Jewish students are excused from classes on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Good Friday is a day off for all.

By no means are these lonely examples of institutional ecumenism. The ecumenical priority nowadays goes to establishing new ways for local religious institutions to respect one another's traditions and become involved with them—the second level of ecumenism.

Ecumenical conversations, face-to-face exchanges at the highest level, deserve everyone's "amen," and the achievements of institutional ecumenism are not only welcome but are, as noted above, also contagious. But both are not the sum total of ecumenism. There is far more to ecumenism than official summits or interchurch exchanges at the local level.

Grassroots Ecumenism A third level of ecumenism emerges from the headaches and heartbreaks of daily living. I describe it as grassroots ecumenism because it flourishes in families and neighborhoods and because it consciously embraces religious diversity as it caters to simple human hopes. Here, despite the blinders of theologians, ecumenism is pervasive and deeply rooted. These experiences seldom appear in religious publications, make newspaper headlines, catch the attention of television newscasters, or show up as footnotes in theological journals.

I refer to movements like Alcoholics Anonymous; to the multiplication of sacramental, interchurch marriages; to the receding importance of denominational boundaries even as the demand for confessional identity surges; and to sustained cooperation, across denominational lines, on issues such as liberation theology; opposition to abortion on demand; peace and pacifism; a preferential option for the poor; social justice; and feminism.

During the twentieth century, the single most important development in North American spirituality has been that generated by Alcoholics Anonymous. More than a million alcoholics meet regularly in A.A. groups. They pray and meditate together, form lifelong friendships, attend retreats, and provide mutual support as they struggle to stay sober. In the Chicago area alone, for example, more than three thousand A.A. groups meet each week. The A.A. impact is centrifugal. Professor Edward Sellner of the College of St. Catherine once noted: "As A.A. and Al-Anon (the association for families of alcoholics) have become known for their suggested program of recovery, more and more other self-help groups are adapting the [A.A.'s] Twelve Steps to their specific audience and needs."

A.A. is an organization, Sellner points out, that is "nondenominational and outside of ecclesial structures" and "recognizes the importance of such [loving people] in its own process of spiritual growth or 'spiritual awakening'....Bill Wilson, the cofounder of A.A., once said that A.A. is the 'story of how, under God's grace, an unsuspected strength has arisen out of a great weakness.' Any of us who take time to reflect upon our contemporary age can appreciate these words when we see that A.A.'s ongoing story is not only transforming the lives of alcoholics but also society."

A.A. insists that its program is spiritual, not religious. For A.A. members, spirituality unites, religion divides. "Each of us," according to an Al-Anon handbook, "must find our way to heaven and the Al-Anon teachings reinforce our faith in the way we choose to worship, whatever it may be." The A.A. reliance on friendship reminds one of C.S. Lewis's insight that all friendships are ultimately gifts from God. A.A. members help alcoholics find a friend when they need one the most.

What is so mind-boggling is that A.A.'s ecumenical spirituality has seldom, if ever, been acknowledged or appreciated by full-time ecumenists. For it is a grassroots spirituality, easing religious division with a spiritual vision. When an A.A. member appeals to "my higher power whom I choose to call God" or when A.A. members who wish to are invited to pray the Lord's Prayer together at the close of a meeting, the experience becomes ecumenically genuine and abiding.

Home-Grown Ecumenism The most popular examples of grassroots ecumenism are interchurch marriages. They used to be called mixed marriages and frowned upon severely. In the 1920s the Catholic church's canon law enjoined the clergy to "deter the faithful from mixed marriage to the best of their power." Today, called interchurch, interfaith, or ecumenical marriages, they are not only tolerated but commonplace as well. And their number increases annually as hostility to such marital unions wanes.

Recent studies indicate that of new marriages involving Catholics in the U.S., 40 percent are mixed. In the Cincinnati archdiocese, 46 percent of new marriages are between Catholics and other Christians. In some Southern and Western states, the rates may rise to 80 percent. The rate for interchurch marriages for Episcopalians is as high as 50 percent in some urban areas.

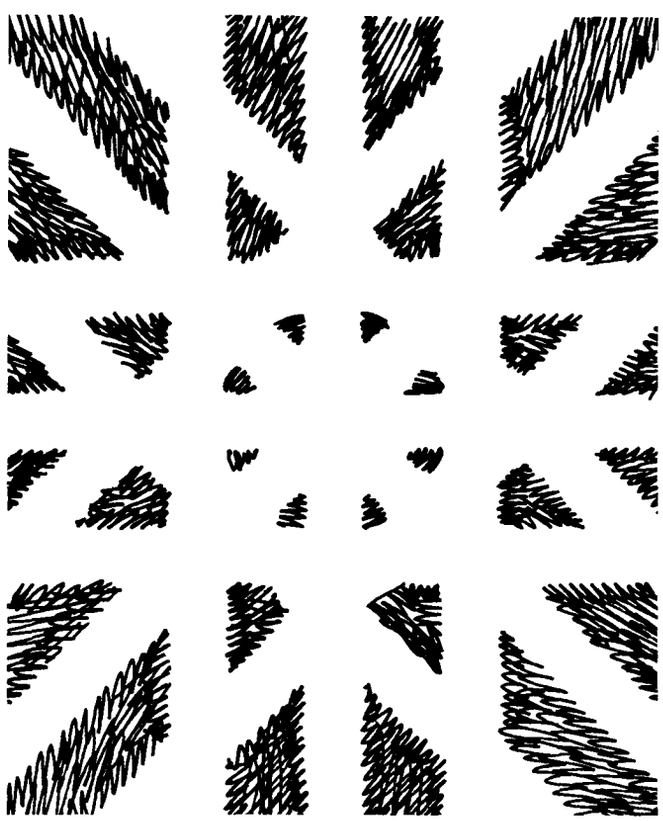
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Millions of U.S. Christians now thrive in families where the marriage is ecumenical.

How well is this potential for grassroots ecumenism grasped and built upon? Not well. From a pastoral perspective, interchurch matches are regularly viewed as "problem" marriages, which some of them are. Marriages are more likely to succeed when husband and wife share the same religious tradition and take it seriously. But explanations for the failures of some interchurch marriages are not clear.

How widely understood is it that a marriage between a Catholic and another Christian is, in the Catholic tradition, a sacrament? How often do a bride and bridegroom realize that each confers the sacrament of matrimony upon the other, despite doctrinal differences or emphases? What often becomes divisive in such a marriage is man-made and hence can be unmade. "Couples in interfaith marriages don't like to see their marriage treated like problems," writes Father George Kilcourse of Louisville's Bellarmine College and author of *Ecumenical Marriage* (National Association of Ecumenical Officers). "The problem is not their marriage, but the division between the churches in which they've been baptized." When Paul and Jeanne Simon reflected on their marriage in a book, *Protestant-Catholic Marriages Can Succeed* (Association Press), they exclaimed that such "a marriage, sanctified by God, is no place for churches to carry out their petty wars."

The set of demands made of each partner by his or her church



institution vexes many an ecumenical marriage. Church rules have been a troubling source of marital friction. Fifty years ago, for example, the conditions for approving an interchurch wedding for a Catholic were regarded as sacrosanct. Since then, these prerequisites have been updated dramatically. To name only a few, these focused on the location of the wedding, the absolute necessity of a Catholic priest as witness, limitations on participation in the worship services of one's spouse, sworn statements that children would be raised as Catholics, and others. Some of the mandatory guidelines emanating from one church or another are still important. But which ones?

The excruciating ecumenical questions in two-church families are not theological disputes but highly personal choices: In which church to worship on Sunday? Which religious education for children? Which organizations to join? Where should the baptism be held? How to cope with relatives who have strong convictions about these matters and who exert pressure to have *their* way? Most Catholic books and pamphlets that discuss ecumenical marriages, for example, supply guidelines for the wedding. Seldom are guideposts available to two faithful Christians trying to make their ecumenical marriage a happy one. They proceed without any ecumenical compass and with only an occasional gesture of support or understanding from their respective pastors. A grassroots ecumenism inspires women and men whenever justice or compassion demands that they accommodate their separate Christian traditions. Their experiences, for me, recall the reply a Jesuit cardinal, Augustin Bea, gave a Protestant observer at Vatican II about a proposed solution to a delicate ecumenical dilemma: "That is theologically impossible but practically necessary." Grassroots ecumenism contends every day with practical adjustments to the theologically impossible.

While theologians struggle at length with the ecumenical riddle of a shared Eucharist, they pay scant attention to a pastoral ministry for interchurch families that would deepen their communion with Christ. The ecumenical potential in interchurch marriages has not been explored. Such marriages do, indeed, advance the ecumenical movement. For a homegrown family, spirituality, simultaneously ecumenical and Christian, is being fostered in countless mixed marriages that are rarely recognized as signs of Christian unity.

Mixed Blessings The groundswell in grassroots ecumenism in the United States can be traced to still another source. It is the contemporary challenge to the faith of all Christians who recognize that the values found in the marketplace, public square, or television studio are often more influential in shaping their lives than their allegiance to a church. Their responses to this challenge soften denominational loyalties. Many of the *common causes* that unite Christians without regard to denomination are not passing fashions but sustained undertakings. The most obvious one is the prolife movement which, despite the high visibility of Catholic bishops, is truly an ecumenical enterprise. The concern

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for racial justice or the earth's environment brings together Christians from several religious streams. The peace movement, especially its pacifist wing, crosses denominational lines with abandon. In Washington, D.C., several dozen lobbyists sponsored by a spectrum of church groups cooperate so that they can shape public policy in the legislative and executive priorities of the federal government. Nor should we overlook the ecumenical presence of the growing Charismatic movement that, reacting to the formalism of mainstream Christianity, accepts Jesus as the hospitality of God. Once largely Protestant, the movement now embraces more than a million self-identified Catholics.

Historic boundaries dividing churches become less distinct. As interest in an institutional church wanes, the appreciation of the church as the communion of Christ soars. Christians who are more traditional, whether Catholics, Lutherans, Orthodox, or Episcopalians, are more at home with one another than they are with their nontraditional counterparts in the same church. Some Christians are so obsessed with divisive intrachurch issues that interchurch differences become insignificant.

Then there are the silent *crossovers* who seldom renounce the Christian church in which they were baptized and raised, but attend other churches. These can be called mixed blessings. At Willow Creek Community church in northeastern Illinois, for example, the Sunday attendance (predominantly young adults) ranges from twelve to fifteen thousand. Church officials estimate that half of these are Catholics. When Billy Graham leads a crusade in some city, churches representing dozens of denominations take part. The local Catholic bishop is likely to praise the evangelist and encourage Catholics to attend the crusade's events. Television evangelists depend upon large numbers of Catholics to swell their viewing audiences.

Among my friends is an interchurch couple. The wife was raised as a Presbyterian. Wed in a Catholic church, she sent her three children to Catholic schools. She became active in her local parish, attended Mass every Sunday with her family, and joined them in receiving Communion. One day the pastor admonished her, reminding her that she had not been formally inducted into the Catholic church. Her startled response was, "I am a Christian. Why must I forswear my Presbyterian heritage? I still love it deeply. Now that I am married, I treasure my Christian commitment as a Catholic." The upshot was that she, undaunted, and her family traveled to another Catholic church.

In *Daedalus* (Spring, 1988), Professor George Lindbeck of Yale University shared an anecdote from a visit to a large Catholic parish in Atlanta: "It was the socially prestigious church in its suburban area, but in the southern context the people around were treating this Catholic church the way they would a Protestant church. The pastor told me that the bishop had warned him that he ought to follow the rule that the head of every parochial organization should be a Catholic. He checked the twenty-odd parochial organizations and discovered that most of them had non-Catholic presidents. He abandoned any effort to give Communion only to Catholics. He told me about a young woman to whom he had spoken just the previous week. She had asked if she could join. She had been around for two years, was organizationally active and highly practicing. He just assumed she was a Catholic. He said, 'Of course you can get a transfer of membership. No problem at all.' She said, 'But you don't understand, Father, I am a Lutheran.' Well, being an ecumenically inclined Catholic, he recommended that she try the neighboring Lutheran churches. She said, 'I've tried all eight of them, and this parish is more like the one I came from on Long Island.'"

The heart and soul of the entire ecumenical enterprise is a spiritual ecumenism. It enlivens grassroots ecumenists, whenever they journey together as an Easter people who believe in the Risen Lord and then strive for reform and renewal. Causes once deemed to be dead and buried are reborn. Acts of contrition and pleas for forgiveness become common. These encounters of the heart reveal the ecumenical wisdom of including, wherever possible, more people and excluding fewer.

My adventures with grassroots ecumenism have been inspirited by a modern parable. In a village in southern Poland after World War I, a Quaker nurse stayed to minister to the young and old. She was beloved by all. Her death prompted an ecumenical conundrum. The only cemetery was a Catholic one. She could not be buried there. After hours of anguished debate, church officials agreed to bury her just outside the cemetery fence. During the night, peasants came and moved the fence to include her grave. Ecumenism (with a capital "E"), regarded as a formal courtship that all parties hope and pray will lead to an interchurch "marriage," is burdened by an uncertain future. Viewed from the pews, however, grassroots ecumenism (with a small "e") may be the wave of the future.

BECOME A 1991 ASSOCIATE

COMMONWEAL ASSOCIATES
15 Dutch Street, New York, N.Y. 10038

☐ Benefactors $1,000 ☐ Charter $125
☐ Supporters $500 ☐ Sustaining $50
☐ Patrons $250

☐ Full Amount enclosed.
☐ Half enclosed; remind me of the balance in 6 months.

(Memberships are tax deductible.)

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Marilee Richards

Wearing the Moon

When cows get drunk they stumble
around clumsy as toads. They careen
headfirst into prickly pears
or topple over sideways as if they could lean
against clouds; a few, forgetting
they are creatures of the earth
and that the air will not gather
beneath their thin wings

make ungainly leaps
toward what they believe to be lovely
in the night sky, persisting
until they find themselves
straddling the rusty carcasses that sit
in the bottoms of ravines

or snagged in the lower branches
of juniper trees. No one ever admits
to being miserable and as the night
wears on, the ones who can still focus
murmur little falsehoods
to each other about how terrific

it is to be wearing the moon
upside down. In the morning
the sun prying open their eyes
is worse than the Octopus
and the Tilt-A-Whirl combined,
and there is nothing to keep the frogs
from rising up inside except to lock
every bone in place,
listen to the grass whistle.

John Robert Quinn

A Winter Day

I look out the window:
All I can see
Is one drab sparrow,
The bones of a tree.
The cold is nearly
Visible;
It stings like a hornet.
White as a skull
The snow is drifting,
Homeless. Oh
There ought to be shelter
Wherever men go.

Dixie Partridge

Aspen Grove

Between the deep arc of sky
and the far valley of smog
coming late to Wind River,
light breathes
in these trees:

small leaves like sensors
pulse with code—
the world's extract rendered
to a wisdom we have not learned to enter,
but are drawn here to obey.

Spring... the light
in the grove penetrates the skin
through new veins,
lime green and translucent.

Autumn... thinning shade
glimmers of pale gold,
the laving of slopes
leaf by leaf.

And even in winter, branches carbon
against white trunks,
the quiet foreknowledge of heartwood
bears the utterance of leaves...
that tremble.

Each season tells you *stay*
and leaves you less sure
where to go but here.

If you camp among the quaking,
you will speak little.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ISLAM
and the
DESTINY of MAN
Charles Le Gai Eaton

"This work is one of the most eloquent and penetrating studies on Islam to appear in a European language. It presents Islam in such a manner that it is both authentic and comprehensible to the intelligent Western reader. It should be read by all Westerners interested in an understanding of the Islamic tradition..."

—*MESA Bulletin*

"The great service that this book offers is to present the Islamic understanding of God, the world, the flow of history, and the essence of humanity in terms that are not only comprehensible to the non-Muslim reader but which actively lift him or her outside a parochial Western orientation. You must understand, says the author, that the Muslim simply looks at things in a manner which is often very different from the way you in the West view them. His approach is both refreshing and persuasive. The combination of rhetoric and logic sweeps one along in the flow of the book. The reader discovers that those elements in the religion of Islam that seem so difficult to understand — and so easy therefore to reject — have a logic of their own and an integrity that is indisputable when seen in context."— *Parabola*

$16.95 pb 242 pages ISBN 0-88706-163-X

To order
State University of New York Press
c/o CUP Services • PO Box 6525
Ithaca, NY 14851
1-800-666-2211
Postage/ handling:
Domestic and Canada, add $2; Foreign, add $3.
MasterCard, VISA, American Express accepted.
Make checks payable to SUNY Press.

SCREEN

BANALITY MADE MAGICAL
LEVINSON'S 'AVALON'

Fairly early in *Avalon*, the Krichinskys (a Polish-Jewish family confidently making its way up into the American middle class of the late 1940s) are leaving their house on a cold winter morning. The Krichinskys never merely move; they bustle. The men are going to work; the women prepare to do errands; the little boy Michael hurries down the front walk on his way to school. His mother calls to him from the porch, "You forgot your dime!" In close-up, Michael makes his hands into a catcher's mitt and yells, "Throw it! Throw it!" His mother does but Michael drops the bus fare. Writer-director Barry Levinson then cuts to a long shot of all the Krichinskys in various stages of departure, but our eyes understandably seek out the now tiny figure of Michael, somewhat left-of-center screen. Crouching, his fingers clumsy inside winter mittens, he tries to pick up the thin coin but can't. He shifts his position to get a better purchase but still doesn't succeed. Meanwhile, all around Michael, his family yells goodbye and departs. And Michael does finally pick up the dime.

This little moment epitomizes what's wonderful in *Avalon*. It is a sliver of banality made magical by both the careful preparation for it (the boy, in close-up pumping his "mitt") and the lack of insistence on it (the cut to long shot that shows the boy's moment as only part of the bigger moment of the family's departure). It is an unremarkable particle of someone else's childhood suddenly becoming a reenactment of a piece of our own past. Whatever our backgrounds, we have all, as children, stopped to recover that recalcitrant dime, and while watching Michael we do it again.

Not every event in *Avalon* is seen through the eyes of the boy, for the entire Krichinsky family is the protagonist of *Avalon*. But many sequences convey the sensation of reality noticed from an odd and interesting angle, a sensation that is common to children and rare for preoccupied adults. In her brilliant essay, "Characters in Fiction," Mary McCarthy noted that "sensation and sensibility are at their height in the child; its thin tender membrane of perception is constantly stabbed by objects, words, and events that it does not understand." McCarthy cites that scene in *Dr. Zhivago* "where the child Yury, taken to his mother's funeral, looks out the window at the cabbages, wrinkled and blue with cold, in the winter fields." Levinson and his gifted cinematographer, Allen Davieu, find many "cabbages" for the Krichinskys, and us, to notice.

Sometimes the noticing is merely of personality quirks: the way, for instance, the heavy, plodding speech pattern of Michael's grade school teacher matches the heavy, lumbering quality of her body and the way it always seems to be sinking into itself. Sometimes the noticing is horrific, as when Michael, inside the family car, helplessly witnesses the attempted mugging of his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

salesman father and sees his parent and the assailant dashing each other against the car windows before they fall out of sight locked in each other's arms. And there is the occasional, purely enjoyable surprise, as when a circus parade interrupts a cranky clan business council. "I just saw an elephant go by," remarks the mother casually. "It's the heat!" thunders an uncle, "You're hallucinating!" And then the hind quarters of a pachyderm appear outside the window.

None of these incidents would make any incision in our "membrane of perception" had not Levinson and Davieu managed to see them from just the right angle, in just the right light, against just the right backgrounds. That parading elephant, for instance, seems to smile at the Krichinskys. Davieu caught the curve of its mouth at precisely the right angle when the elephant was turning its head in the camera's direction. What got recorded seems to be a smile. This is deft filmmaking.

There is more to *Avalon*, though, than such vivid details. It also has a socially critical schema that doesn't pay off. The sight of Grandfather Sam arriving in Baltimore around 1914 in the middle of the city's July 4 celebration is repeated throughout the movie as a motif of immigrant faith in the wonderland of America, where anything can happen, where anyone can succeed. "Avalon" is the name of the neighborhood Sam wanders through but it is also the earthly paradise where King Arthur and his knights rest. (Sam, a man of rudimentary education, might not know this, but he would probably come to know the popular song, "I Left My Love in Avalon.") The Krichinsky fortunes go up and down and up, and, by the middle of the 1950s, the squabbling, loving clan has become atomized, suburbanized, and so alienated from tradition that old Sam, walking away from his wife's funeral (unattended by many family members), mutters brokenly, "this is not a family." The last shot of the film is a reprise of Sam's arrival amid the patriotic hoopla of 1914. By this time, the motif has become a reproach, an emblem of the promise that America fails to keep, of the immigrant's American Dream that will never be fulfilled.

But the story that Levinson actually tells doesn't justify his implicit indictment of America. The Krichinskys are split up not by America's customs or institutions but by universal woes: clan bickering over money and imagined affronts, the frictions between generations, aging and death. These declines are truthfully portrayed by Levinson, but they don't add up to the social indictment that his structure implies.

Furthermore, Levinson's need to see the grandfather as a paragon of old-world peasant wisdom gives Armin Mueller-Stahl a role that is patently manufactured to tug at our heartstrings, a patriarch without the faults, the crags, the darknesses that a major character must have to convince. He ends up being nothing more than a cinematic descendant of Irene Dunne in *I Remember Mama*.

By contrast, Joan Plowright, Aiden Quinn, and Elizabeth Perkins are enabled by their roles to display contrasting traits, and therefore their performances, all excellent, live more vividly in the memory. Quinn's work is particularly haunting (though his face evokes Ireland rather than Eastern Europe). Alternating slightly stunned quizzicality with familial tenderness and a hard-

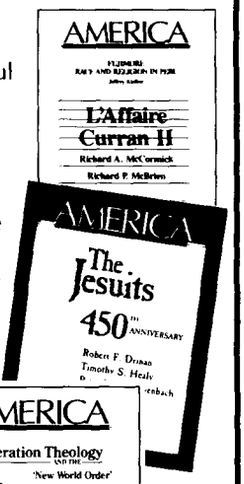
Receive 22 Issues Of

AMERICA

The National Catholic Weekly

For As Little As $14.95

Edited by the Jesuits since 1909, AMERICA is a weekly journal of opinion published for the thoughtful reader interested in the Catholic perspective. Featured regularly are incisive articles on contemporary theology and current events, lively film and book reviews as well as special theme editions that provide an in-depth look at controversial issues and prominent personalities.



Join us as we explore such complicated issues as:

- Academic Freedom in Catholic Universities
- American Catholic Intellectual Life
- The Crisis in Hispanic Ministry
- Abortion Tests for Catholic Politicians
- The Health Care Crisis
- Archbishop Romero, the U.S. and El Slavador

Issues which, in the best of Jesuit tradition, invoke lively discourse and serious thought.

To subscribe, simply fill out the coupon and return it to us along with your payment. We'll then send you 22 weeks of our award-winning magazine for as much as 45% off the cover price.

AMERICA
The National Catholic Weekly
Subscription Dept.
P.O. Box 77274 · Atlanta, GA 30357-1274

☐ Yes! Please send me 22 issues of AMERICA at the special introductory price of $14.95.

☐ Bill me. ☐ Payment enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

SA 1308

Offer valid for new U.S. subscriptions only.
Rates higher for Canadian and foreign subscriptions.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pressed breadearner's exasperation, he serves up a rarity: a witty portrait of a simple, humorless man.

Avalon may fail as social insight but it is wonderfully alive. It doesn't expand our adult perception of the way our society works, but it does turn us into wondering, noticing, absorbing children. *Avalon* is a minor masterpiece of sensation and sensibility, flawed only by its maker's inability to reach beyond sensation and sensibility. RICHARD ALLEVA

STAGE

WITCHES' TALES

'AMERICAN PLAN' & 'DIATRIBE'

Lili Adler, the heroine—so to speak—of Richard Greenberg's *The American Plan*, is imaginative (i.e., a liar), hysterical, dependent on her mother, and desperate in her dependence. She sees herself as a captive princess, guarded by Olivia—a handsome, self-contained black woman with no visible life of her own—and surrounded by a moat (her mother). Although, moat-like, Eva can keep away the princes that come to rescue her daughter, she is—dramatically, at least—the traditional evil witch—not the hard-breathing, cackling, Margaret Hamilton kind of witch suitable for Oz. The play takes place in the Catskills in 1960. Eva is a wealthy German Jewish widow, a survivor of the Nazis, who had built elegant isolation for herself, a summer home from which she can watch and condescend to the antics of the hearty, heavy-feeding vacationers at the camp across the lake, or—like the Czarina they call her—occasionally join the peasants for mahjong. She is a marvelous character—the theatrical heart of the play—and Joan Copeland is fascinating in what is probably the best role of her career. Eva is not only self-assured (at least on the surface) but malevolent. She speaks in the same quiet but commanding voice, at once civilized and threatening, whether she is mocking the campers across the lake, commenting on the decline of the world, or shredding the disguise of the current prince. By the end of the play, it becomes clear that she has made an emotional cripple of her daughter not out of ignorance or nastiness, but because she needs to keep her. You are home to me, she says, her voice as controlled as always, in a scene in which Lili cries out for any place but home.

The play's prince is Nick Lockridge, a WASP in unfamiliar country, who has come to the camp on the lake with the rich Jewish girl he plans to marry. There he finds and perhaps falls in love with Lili; the "perhaps" because Lili (or Eva, at least) is as rich as his fiancee and he is a Cheeveresque charmer without funds. Nick (D.W. Moffett) and Lili (Wendy Makkena) are an attractive odd couple who seem to find strength in one another, but there are too many holes in this prince's armor for him to outsmart the witch of the moat. Unnerved by his mother's death, the loss of the family money, his father's suicide, Nick loses control of his life, gets fired, breaks with his homosexual lover, wanders from temporary shelter to temporary shelter, hopes to find salvation by marrying money. In the end, unable to resist the lover who has come in search of him—another WASP loose in the Catskills—he cuts and runs. In a final scene, ten years later, we meet Lili, who has become a slightly softer version of her now dead mother, and Nick, who has never built the dream city he once promised. In fact, he has never built anything. He has long since lost his lover and has dwindled to teaching math in a prep school near Cincinnati. At this point, the Greenberg of *Eastern Standard*, the chronicler of the fashionably correct, emerges, for Nick's decline is made clear by his ill-fitting tweed jacket and slacks, so unlike the clothes he wore when he was a prince—or, at least, a contender.

For me, the play is more interesting than *Eastern Standard* because the dark underbelly of the situation here is more believable than the sunny angst of Greenberg's Broadway success. The difficulty with the new play is that the situation, so neatly defined in the first act, is overwhelmed with too much in the second: Too much biography for Nick; too much ugliness for Eva; too mechanical an introduction of the homosexual subplot. Having been pulled into the amorphousness of the first act fairy story, we are smothered by specificity in the second act. In the final scene, Nick recalls a German song Lili sang to him which she repeats and translates: "There is happiness, but it is for others." That is far too neat a final statement. Greenberg intends something more, I think. The play's title comes from the room-and-much-board program at the camp, but the suggestion of Nick's friend that they both marry, become good husbands, fathers, providers, and continue their affair is also an American plan. Like Nick's dream city, it would give them everything. It is, of course, a promise of disaster. So, too, with the fairy-tale ending, had it been possible. Had Lili, knowing all that Nick has done, run off with him (as she says she would have) and had he carried her away for love rather than money, the ending—the play suggests—would have been the same. Whatever road they took, Lili's song would still be appropriate. *The American Plan* is a very dark fairy tale.

In this season of fairy tales, Harry Kondoleon's *Love Diatribe* is—ostensibly—the one with the happy ending. A short play about an acrimonious family, it brings wimpish Orin, who blames his spinelessness on his upbringing, home for dinner although no one can remember having invited him and there is no food in the house except that brought in by Mrs. Anderson from next door. Neither Orin's father, who suffers from piles and a conviction that America is in ruins, nor his mother, a nurse with aching feet and an acid tongue, can speak directly to him; and his sister, who gets most of the play's funny lines, is not much better. Add that the sister, who has just left her husband, is having an affair with Mrs. Anderson's slow-witted son, who used to beat up both Orin and her as they grew up, and that Mrs. Anderson blames the death of her other son from AIDS on Orin and the other kids who mocked him when he was young. She is convinced that people die of what is said to them, done to them. This is the negative version of the positive message, the love diatribe, that Frieda—a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

good witch—brings into this platitudinous family scene. An infusion of a tea made from dried flowers ("I do not drink pot-pourri," says the sister) and a sincerely reiterated, "I love you," will solve all problems, smooth all edges, bring everyone together.

And so it does. The parents kiss; the sister and her lover plan marriage; Mrs. Anderson beams; and Orin and Frieda get together. There is a certain amount of nasty vigor in the early scenes, but the fantastic change at the end needs something more than the Circle Rep production brought to it, if we are to accept the happy ending. Maybe we are not supposed to. Ibsen (*The Wild Duck*), Gorky (*The Lower Depths*), and O'Neill (*The Iceman Cometh*) have all warned us against the transforming stranger. Frieda, as Martha Gehman plays her and perhaps as Kondoleon wrote her, comes across as someone out of the Hitler youth movement. At the beginning, in a foolish speech to the audience, she explains that she is not a villain. The fairy-tale structure of the piece suggests that she is indeed a good witch, but she is such an unpleasant presence that I found myself longing for Joan Copeland's wicked Eva. Could that have been what Kondoleon had in mind?

GERALD WEALES

MEDIA

JUST DOING IT

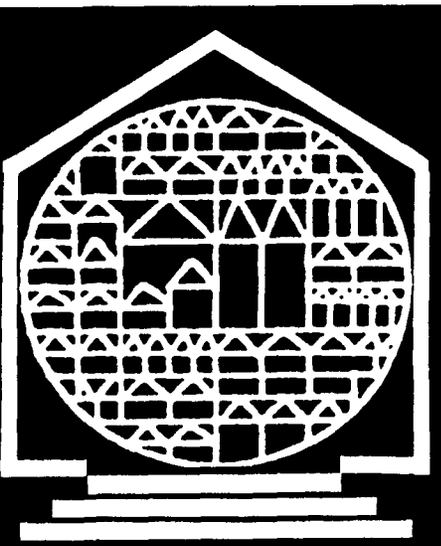
STEPHEN KING'S CRAFT

Stephen King doesn't know it, but he and I go back a ways (that almost sounds like one of his own innocuous/ominous openings, doesn't it?). It was 1986. I was a member, for the fifth time, of the Pulitzer Prize Fiction Jury. I'm not sure why I was there, but my cojurors were a very distinguished book reviewer for a national magazine, and a *very* distinguished, herself Pulitzer-winning novelist. And King's *It* was published that year. I read it—read *It*?—and did what we used to call in the stoned sixties, a "silly." I wrote, diffidently, to my two co-jurors and suggested that, while we might not want to award King the prize for that year, couldn't we, maybe, like, *mention* him, and acknowledge that he was an American writer immersed in American culture and one hell of a good storyteller (those, by the way, being the announced optimal standards for the Pulitzer Prize)? It was a really diffident letter—honest.

The responses were not diffident. I may as well have suggested an orgy in a crack house. One of my colleagues—I've saved the letter—said that *nothing* would induce him/her to sign anything praising Stephen King, and continued, "I regard King as the chief cancer on our republic of letters—even more than Louis L'Amour or Danielle Steele."

As Jack Benny used to say: "*Well!*" I'd never read L'Amour or Steele, but I let the whole thing drop and we proceeded with our deliberations.

And that's the last time I've been asked to be on the Pulitzer Prize Fiction Jury.



Harmony*

*"WHEN THE CHURCH WAS THE HIGHEST BUILDING, THE TOWER WAS AN ESSENTIAL SYMBOL. NOWADAYS, IT IS WELL TO ACHIEVE THE SAME PURPOSE NOT BY AN OUTWARD GESTURE BUT BY AN INWARD GRACE."

LEWIS MUMFORD
COMMONWEAL APRIL 15, 1925

*"ARTISTICALLY, IT IS SAFE IN OUR TIME TO DEAL IN FRAGMENTATION. WHAT IS DIFFICULT IS TO CREATE STRUCTURES OF WHOLENESS, INTEGRITY, AND HARMONY."

EMIL ANTONUCCI
COMMONWEAL JUNE 2, 1989

OVER 65 YEARS TO BUILD ON

COMMONWEAL

15 Dutch Street, New York, N.Y. 10038
Trial subscription offer: 11 issues for $10.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

☐ **I prefer a full year's subscription at $32.** 1/25/91

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

So I forgot the whole thing, and then, in November 1990 ABC did a four-hour "Novel for Television" of *It*, and the memories came flooding back. "It" on TV is not—King purists can just be quiet—*It* the novel: but it's close enough to be wonderful, scary, and finally (I *mean* this), as generous and affirming as King's stories usually are. "It" on TV is not the best made-for-TV movie ever: for me, at least, that will always be Spielberg's "Duel." But it is a grand movie and I have no doubt that it will be rented and seen for a very long time until we all begin to think of it as a classic. "It" on TV also reminds us—those of us not anxiety-ridden about the health of our "republic of letters," anyhow—that Mr. King, however prolific he may be and however fabulously rich, is our premiere and much-to-be-valued storyteller, and that he is so because his stories *matter*. Or is it a fluke that nearly all of his books have been transformed into films and that at least three of those films—*Carrie*, *The Shining*, and *Stand by Me*—are among the most important of the last twenty years?

It's almost like a King plot: maybe it *is* a King plot. I mean, this guy is *good*. He does what every storyteller wants to do. He tells stories that grab you in some deep, maybe forgotten part of yourself, and make you want to hear what comes next; he makes a lot of money doing it; and he keeps coming up with new stories.

This is, already, a cancer on our republic of letters? What is the mysterious, malevolent force—here's the King-plot part—that flaws this picture, that somehow blights the name "Stephen King" with the leprous hues of the second-rate, the tawdry, the (gasp!) nonliterary? What is the monster polluting the reputation of this honest and skilled craftsman?

Well, I'll tell you. The name of the monster is "Literature." The quotation marks are important because by "Literature" I don't mean what people read and write and value because it sanctions and sanctifies their lives, but what is vetted, validated, and canonized as what you *ought* to take seriously by the establishment—which, by and large, doesn't have the damnest idea what its own most revered classics are really about. If you want to think in terms of stultifying, soul-devouring monsters, and if you know the King story, you can even think about it as "LITerature": what the universities teach, if they are not good teachers, and what governments invoke, if they are not *very* good governments. We have heard George Bush quote Shakespeare, uncomprehendingly. Can you imagine *him* having the guts to quote Mickey Spillane?

I've called King a "storyteller" throughout, not a "writer." "Writer" or—gaah!—"author" are terms we—or somebody—maybe the French—have heaped with such a baggage of self-consciousness and involution (such a word!) that it no longer makes any sense at all. Unless, of course, you are planning to rewrite *Waiting for Godot* for the thousandth time, but this time with *no* dialogue (oops—sorry, Beckett did that) or, better, a long book on *Godot* to demonstrate that your own nihilism is more so, and more sophisticated than, Beckett's.

Don't get me wrong. I have no intention of disparaging the masterworks of modern writing: my daytime job, after all, is teaching them. But I *would* rather read Kafka, or Joyce, or Pynchon with Stephen King than with most of the officially certified "professors" (quotes important here, too): just because King is, unlike the "professors," above everything else a *storyteller*, and because he keeps faith with the knowledge that if "Literature" isn't storytelling, then it deserves neither the quotation marks, the capital L, nor tenure.

Take *It*. There's this town, see, possessed by a demon that wakes up every thirty years and kills and eats a lot of kids, then goes back to sleep. But seven kids—now grown up and successful—killed It last time around, and when it wakes up again they come back to kill it once and for all. Some of them die, but most survive, and in surviving they learn to make peace with their unhappy adolescent past, they learn to love one another again as they did in their youth, and they find the courage to face down not just the monster in the town, but the monster that is their future and yours and mine.

Corny? You bet. So is all of Shakespeare and the best of everybody else. Vulgar and sensationalist? You bet. So is etc., etc. Something of immense value? Let me be the first—I hope—to say *Yes*.

Neither King's dog-in-the-manger critics nor his oh-boy-we-love-horror fans seem to have noticed the immense current of tenderness and nostalgia that underlies his gothicism. Only Twain and Fitzgerald—maybe Kerouac—among American writers really *miss* the promising vistas of youth as much as he; and this quality, his central gift as a fabulator, translates from print to film to TV with absolutely no lessening of force. It is what makes him, I think, our first *truly* multimedia storyteller. Because King,

The Joseph Campbell Phenomenon: Implications for the Contemporary Church

Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday
April 5 - 7, 1991 — Georgetown University
Washington, DC — Conference Center

Sponsored by
The Georgetown Center for Liturgy, Spirituality & the Arts

A conference presenting an appreciation and a critique of Joseph Campbell's work, an analysis of the impact his work and personality have had on contemporary Americans, and proposals to meet the challenges this phenomenon raises for the contemporary church in the areas of spirituality and worship.

Speakers Include:

William Dinges
Matthew Fox, O.P.
Gertrud Mueller Nelson
Robert Segal
Beverley Zabriskie
Peter Fink, S.J.
Brian McDermott, S.J.
Dennis O'Connor
David Steindl-Rast, O.S.B.

For registration information call or write:
The Georgetown Center for Liturgy, Spirituality & the Arts
3513 "N", NW, Washington, DC 20007
Tel: (202) 687-4420 Monday through Friday, 9 to 5

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in whatever medium, is always telling us stories of the loss of innocence and hope. His monsters, in fact, are always the monsters of growing up, growing old, growing into that grey pleasure that is the absence of real expectation: and who has not faced *that* devil? Why else does It reawaken every thirty years—just the length of time it takes to get a job, make a life, and forget or repress the pure ecstasy of being twelve?

And his stories—as all stories do, if they're good ones—tell us that we haven't forgotten, or need not forget. We kill the monster by giving in to the joy of the story, reliving the myth, and recementing our links to what made us what and who we are.

King does this in a prose that is not "Literature," maybe. He does it in a more ancient and vastly more sacred form—that of the storyteller—that reminds us that all media are there to preserve the myths of the tribe, and make us new.

FRANK McCONNELL

THE PURITAN ETHIC GOES SOUTH

Will Latin America become Protestant?

JOHN A. COLEMAN

The 1990 election of an Evangelical vice-president of Peru on the ticket of a Catholic, Alberto Fujimori, raised questions again about the so-called "invasion of the sects" in Latin America. Lima's Jesuit archbishop, Augusto Vargas, supported Fujimori's rival, Mario Vargas Llosa, an agnostic, out of fear that the evangelicals would find a new cultural platform with Fujimori's Change '90 party. All of this is in the context of persistent questions about the growth of Protestantism in the Southern Hemisphere: Will Latin America turn Protestant? Does Protestantism represent a new cultural phase for Latin America, a blueprint for economic modernization and cultural pluralism?

David Martin and David Stoll, who tackle these questions and many others in these new books, arrive independently at the conclusion that Pentecostalism may contain the necessary elements for fostering massive cultural change in Latin America—a shift toward the "Protestant ethic" needed for Latin America's take-off to modernity.

Martin, a sociologist, contrasts the Northern European Protestant ideal of personal and cultural development through voluntarism with the more authoritarian and organic Catholic ideal that fuses state, religion, and society. He celebrates the Protestant presence in Latin America as the catalytic social breakthrough necessary for the privatization of religion that will lower the religious tensions in civic ideologies. Stoll, an anthropologist, shares Martin's conclusion that, as one wing of a wider religious reformation, Pentecostalism has the potential, at least, to transform Latin America culturally, socially, and politically. But Stoll is more attentive than Martin to charges that Pentecostal missionaries from the United States often act as tools of right-wing demagogues bent on undermining liberation theology and its challenge to North American domination of the region. Stoll also takes note of the way in which an explicitly apolitical stance in explosive situations of injustice can slip into tacit alliances with right-wing military regimes that abuse human rights. These two books should be read in tandem to correct one another.

David Martin's earlier study, *A General Theory of Secularization* (Harper & Row, 1978), made fresh sense of a bewildering array of statistics on church practice in Europe and the Anglo-Saxon countries. In this now classic study, Martin carefully parsed the secularization thesis in order to focus on structural differentiation, the mechanisms whereby the church is partly eased out of spheres of social legitimation—communication, welfare, and education—in favor of specialized institutions and professions. In his analysis, religion in modern societies does not so much wither away as end up specializing in cultural matters and the personal concerns of individuals. The absence of this *structural* differentiation impedes the development of modernity and, in Martin's view, it is Catholicism, as a sociological type, that most strongly resists this differentiation of church and politics into specialized spheres.

Martin reweaves this theory in *Tongues of Fire*. The data from which he draws are both stunning and incontrovertible. Since 1960, Protestantism, especially in its pentecostal forms, has tripled its numbers in Argentina, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic; quadrupled in Brazil; quintupled in El Salvador, Peru, and Costa Rica; and grown six-fold in Ecuador and Colombia and seven-fold in Guatemala (where Protestantism may become the majority religion by the end of the century). Latin America is becoming Protestant more rapidly than Central Europe did in the sixteenth century.

Protestantism has come to Latin

JOHN A. COLEMAN, S.J., *is professor of religion and society at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley.*

Books Discussed in this Essay

Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America, *David Martin, Basil Blackwell, $39.95, 352 pp.*

Is Latin America Turning Protestant?, *David Stoll, University of California, $29.45, 424 pp.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

America in three waves. Nineteenth-century Protestantism (mainly Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian) usually restricted itself to the enclaves of British and German immigrants where it stood for religious liberty, economic liberalism, and progress; it focused its efforts on education. It fostered upward mobility in its congregants but did not penetrate beyond a small niche of the population, and this very mobility quickly quenched its evangelical fire.

The second wave of Protestant penetration came after World War II through North American evangelical-fundamentalist groups. In spite of massive expenditures of time, money, and personnel, these sects did not reap the scriptural hundredfold in conversions. They were typically too straightlaced and puritanical, opposed emotional forms of worship, and were exceedingly slow to let local Evangelicals run their own show.

The third wave came after 1960 from the Pentecostals (Assemblies of God, the Four-Square Gospel church, the Church of God of Cleveland, Tennessee). Organizationally indigenous and partially self-reliant, Pentecostalism shows wide adaptive abilities in liturgy and doctrine. Martin stands amazed at "the capacity of Pentecostalism simultaneously to conform and to transform. It finds out the morphology and shape of the local society and participates in the life of people. At the same time, it provides new networks of participation and offers lines of organization and communication along which signals of modernity and symbols of equality may travel."

Overall, Latin America is 10 percent Protestant and, given the weak practice of most Catholics, they represent the majority of consistent churchgoers. By 1985 there were more Protestant missionaries in Latin America (over eleven thousand) than in any other part of the globe. In Brazil alone, where Protestants represent slightly more than 10 percent of the population, there were seventeen thousand ordained and thirteen thousand nonordained full-time Protestant ministers (by contrast there are thirteen thousand ordained Catholic priests).

Martin sees Pentecostalism as the third form of the Protestant ethic, following the seventeenth-century Puritan ethic, much studied by Max Weber, and the nineteenth-century Methodist ethic, detailed in the historical studies of Elie Halevy. Martin wants to highlight how the same ethos (now carried by the Pentecostals) contains the latent cultural logic of participation, voluntarism, self-government, and personal initiative characteristic of Puritanism and Methodism. In the preface to *Tongues of Fire*, Peter Berger argues to that point: "The same ethos evinces affinities with the spirit of capitalism, with a hunger for education, and (last but not least) with a favorable disposition toward democratic politics." But as Martin notes, not every Latin American country is equally fertile ground for Pentecostal outreach, "The optimum conditions for Protestant expansion exist where the church has been seriously weakened but the culture has not been secularized as in Brazil, Guatemala, and Chile."

Pentecostalism combines a potent combination of the orderly in work and family life (sobriety, thrift, regularity, and orderly community are the rule) with the riotous (worship services allow emotional tongue-speaking and all-night songfests). This represents the first popular acceptance of Protestantism among a number of important groups in Latin America. Using songs and stories, Pentecostalism enters a Latin American cultural world of *curanderos* with new forms of healing, and shamans have been drawn into the evangelical fold. It also has its attractions for women. Although not feminist in any explicit way, Pentecostalism appeals to women by offering them a public place where they can experience independence, self-esteem, and power and by taming in their men the abuse of drink and the cult of *machismo*. The expanding Pentecostal churches also appeal to the poor, offering them hope and community, as well as to uprooted peasants who are helped to fend off chaos and anomie.

Pentecostalism also has made inroads in areas of sociological or cultural dislocation and among special niches of the population (for example, the urban proletariat in Chile and Brazil; displaced rural migrants in other areas). It helps the poor and marginal middle class to acquire skills of organization, self-help, and self-expression that make them articulate and self-reliant. Pentecostals, argues Martin, "are able to create voluntary networks of mutual support where once there were instabilities of tribal unity and rural hierarchy."

In Martin's view, no single religion in a politically modernizing Latin America can any longer offer comprehensive coverage as Catholicism once did, or attempt to promulgate norms for society as a whole, or act as its moral mentor. In reaction to an earlier Catholic church-society nexus, Pentecostals become apolitical. They see a high political profile as characteristically Catholic and react against it. Moreover, their new theology reinforces this apolitical stance. According to one of Stoll's informants, "the main political reason that the poor turn to Evangelicalism is not anticommunism but safety....Besides, Evangelical doctrine gives a reason, not a solution, for the suffering faced by the poor. Many poor have given up on solutions."

Martin downplays this Pentecostal apolitical stance since "its contingent and temporary political role is quite contrary to its cultural logic." That logic sees Pentecostalism as creating free space for the poor and creating a psychic mutation (the Protestant ethic) that paves the way not for a political but a cultural revolution of modernity. "The competitive edge of evangelical Protestantism in Latin America comes from the creation of an active laity, proselytizing along chains of personal and family contact and working alongside a huge pastorate recruited on the basis of ability to communicate and not prolonged theological training. This is how Evangelical and Pentecostal Christians remain in contact with ordinary people." Catholics, in contrast, look to long education programs that often separate ministers from people.

Thus Pentacostalism paves the way for modernity by breaking up religious monopolies and restricting religious influence to the realm of culture or the private sphere. Pentecostals and Catholic base communities compete for the same members but, ultimately, as Stoll argues, "what has flung open Latin America to evangelical Protestantism is the Catholic church's inability to decentralize its system of authority." And according to Martin, many disgruntled Catholic catechists or delegates of the word have become Protestant pastors, taking their people with them.

A certain *déjà vu* colored my reading of Martin: as a graduate student in soci-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ology I read avidly about development, modernization, and "stages of economic take-off," in which third-world countries would traverse the same pattern of economic development as the Western industrial democracies. The fit Martin makes between Latin American Pentecostalism and the Puritan ethic and English Methodism is, like those "stages," too neat and too forced. At points, he seems overenamored of the Anglo-Saxon pattern of separation of church and politics as the unique blueprint for cultural modernity. It is no less ethnocentric, ahistorical, and misleading when applied to cultural modernization as when applied to economics.

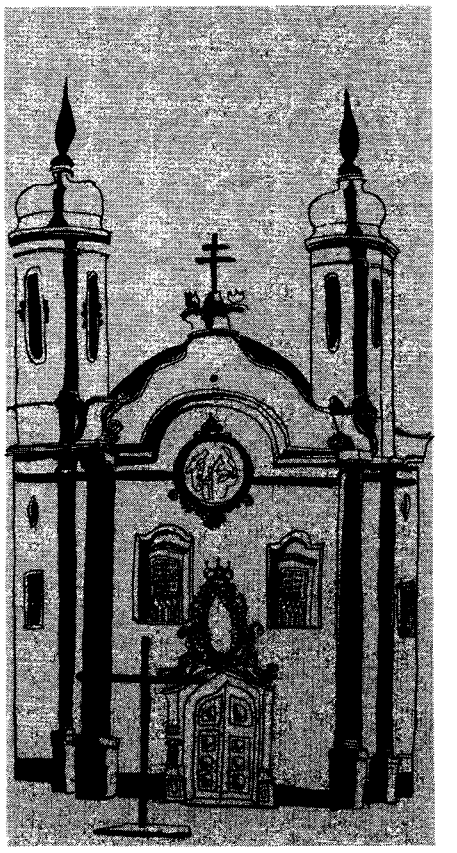
And then there are the stubborn contradictions to Martin's thesis. Far from serving as germ-cells of democracy, Pentecostal churches echo the authoritarianism and the patron-client relationships of the societies in which they emerge. Pentecostal pastors serve as boss-brokers for votes and patronage, mirroring the *hacienda* owner and traditional *patrao* in Brazil. Any easy connections between the Pentecostal ethic and the spirit of democracy should be tempered by remembering the short-lived Guatemalan dictatorship of the Pentecostal *caudillo*, General Ephrain Rios Montt—who combined evangelical radio sermons and death squads with religious subservience to the elders of the Word Church.

What about the spirit of capitalism? In a study of religious conversion among Tzeltal Indians in Chiapas in Southern Mexico, anthropologist Paul Turner has shown that a reforming Catholic response to the Protestant inroads among the Tzeltals produced the superior fruits of the so-called Protestant ethic. In general, reformed versions of Catholicism surpass Pentecostals in generating upward mobility and economic advance. So why not speak of reformed Catholicism and the spirit of capitalism? As Andrew Greeley's studies of upward mobility among American Catholics have shown, Weber's Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism cannot be extrapolated from earlier epochs as if Catholicism, per se, militates against upward mobility.

It seems to me that Martin engages in some sleight-of-hand calculations when he sets forth the three options he sees available to Catholicism in Latin America, all of them fraught with competitive disadvantages vis-à-vis Pentecostals. The church could (1) renew earlier ties to the landowning and military elites; (2) refurbish the Catholic-action/Christian-democracy strategy; or (3) turn to liberation theology and the base community strategy. In his view, liberation theology is simply too political and its goals too dependent on structural changes beyond the power of the poor to achieve. Moreover, its base community strategy jeopardizes the hierarchical principle in Catholicism. If for no other reason than survival and coping in repressive regimes, Martin believes that the poor will prefer Pentecostalism's easier route toward a spiritual revolution in relationships.

Yet the base community movement in Latin America is not tied explicitly to liberation theology. In most cases, as Marcello Azevedo shows in his careful study, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in Brazil* (Georgetown University, 1987), they do not have an overtly political content. Like small Pentecostal units, they provide small-scale welfare, networks of support, and indigenous leadership. By stressing uniquely political strategies, Martin overlooks the fact that the overwhelming majority of Latin American bishops and church ministers opt for a pastoral rather than a political strategy. Catholicism has not been and does not have to remain passive and unimaginative in the face of the Pentecostal challenge.

Most curious, however, is Martin's refusal, on several occasions, to address alternate interpretations that argue that Protestant missionaries undermine practices and customs which sustain group viability and identity and that they encourage strife-filled social division. These alternatives include accusations that Pentecostals are acting as agents of U.S. culture. Among anthropologists working in Latin American area studies there is widespread criticism of the evangelical sects for undermining cultural unities. Here, again, Stoll serves as a needed corrective. He carefully documents the role of the U.S. new evangelical Right in supporting evangelism in Latin America in order to further their "dominion" thinking, that is, the belief that Christ is calling the Evangelists to share government dominion with him over the world. Some Evangelicals defend the death squads in El Salvador as furthering U.S. interests on the assumption that "God will protect any nation that sees the potential for world Evangelism," the United States, for example.



Stoll warns that "Evangelism continues to be used as an instrument not just of U.S. foreign policy but of covert and immoral 'dirty wars.'...If the experience of Central America is a guide, the more established Evangelical missions will have their doubts [about being manipulated and used for outside purposes and goals]. But little will be said in public. Least of all will anything be said at home, lest supporters get the idea that their missionaries are suspiciously liberal." In referring to North American Evangelical supporters of the *contra* war against Nicaragua, Stoll notes "strangely those who professed their Christianity most strenuously were the most indifferent to the methods involved: destroying clinics, raping women, cutting the throats of prisoners, blowing up truckloads of civilians."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Stoll also documents the way in which Campus Crusade for Christ used the Catholic charismatic movement to wean practicing Catholics away. He puts it bluntly. "It is not hard to see how Evangelicalism could split communities into hostile fractions....Backed by the state, Protestants were driving a spike into the heart of the old community."

Perhaps, as Martin writes, these older forms of community must die if modernity is to take root. Still, in reading Stoll, we have reason to mourn what is being lost; it is the lack of sensitivity to these losses that can make Martin sound like an apologist for the inevitable and destructive world of a modernity which requires the erosion of community and loss of meaning.

A very different kind of politico-historical reading of the preconditions for modernity might stress the necessity of an ethos of pluralistic civility for modern political and economic forms. Neither Martin nor Stoll presents any convincing evidence that the new Pentecostal sects carry any "genetic code" for this kind of civility. Indeed, the opposite!

On the other hand, not all Pentecostals have shown themselves political reactionaries. Mexico's Jean Pierre Bastian, a major student of the subject, notes that Protestantism, far from secularizing or "disenchanting" Latin American society, has been "re-enchanted" itself by Latin America in the form of a mainly reactionary Pentecostalism that mystifies the interest of the poor (*Protestantismo y Sociedad en México*, 1983).

The real story of the explosion of Pentecostalism in Latin America, it seems to me, is the conspicuous success of Evangelicalism in occupying niches of receptivity to the new religion among uprooted populations: recent migrants to cities and colonizers along the frontier. These niches are not, however, infinite and statistics about the number of Protestants are frequently inflated or based on extrapolations. Moreover, rapid early growth of new religions frequently comes up against a wall of limits, cultural and sociological, to continued rapid further expansion. It is also important to note the new and sometimes strong polarization among and between Evangelical groups in Latin America; it is not a house united.

In looking at Evangelical growth rates in Latin America, we ought to also remember Max Weber's insistence on an "elective affinity" between the Protestant ethic and other material, structural, and economic conditions for capitalism. Some doubt these conditions are present in much of Latin America. Stoll at least enters into an argument on this issue. According to Guilliermo Cook, a prominent Latin American author, the economic crisis of the last decade has neutralized the ability of the Protestant ethic to "redeem and lift" converts. Under less hostile conditions, Protestantism helped converts move upward in the social scale. Cook believes the dynamism unleashed by Protestantism will now have to go in other directions.

To be sure, Roman Catholicism stands at some disadvantage in competing with Pentecostalism among the uprooted and marginal. It has less flexibility in ministry because of the requirement for a celibate clergy who must undergo an extended education. Sometimes its base community strategy is more overtly political than the poor want or feel they can achieve as pawns in a power game. And often Catholic prelates fall back, almost instinctively, on alliances between throne and altar that compromise the church's work with the marginalized and the poor.

Nonetheless, the cultural power of Catholicism remains quite strong. Catholic symbols merge with strong and potent markers of national and cultural identity. Conversion to Protestantism, on the other hand, often entails a break with that culture and the family nexus. That is why Pentecostalism fares best when whole families convert. In divided enclaves that include both Catholics and Protestants, Catholics retain community leadership. Community leadership carries with it cultural power. Catholicism may also have more staying power. Protestants disproportionately emigrate to North America, siphoning off cultural leadership. Perhaps Stoll has the apt metaphor for Pentecostal churches when he refers to them as "survival units" for the poor. This is a far cry from the view that they will be major forces for political and social change. Still, given the radical organizational problems of Catholicism, espe-

ASI

American Summer Institutes

Summer 1991

THEME: "OTHER WORLDS/OUR WORLD"

Leysin — July 17 to July 31
(Optional: Zurich, Basel, Colmar — July 31 to August 6)
Directors: Ted and Katie Gill

St. Andrews — June 29 to July 19
(Optional: Iona and the Highlands — June 26 to June 29)
Directors: George and Rose Hall

Rome — June 26 to July 10
(Optional: Siena, Florence, Pisa — July 10 to July 15)
Directors: Theo and Ruth Ann Gill

Uppsala/Helsinki/Leningrad/Tallinn — June 29 to July 19
(Optional: Norway — July 19 to July 24)
Directors: Ralph and Birgitta Peterson

Princeton Theological Seminary is Participating in all Institutes

American Summer Institutes
P. O. Box 40 • Princeton Junction, NJ 08550
Telephone (609) 799-5349

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cially shortage of trained personnel and a disadvantage in the amount of money it is able to expend, Pentecostalism seems likely to continue to grow among uprooted and marginal segments of the population. But the threat will not be overlooked by Catholics who are, already, calling for new and imaginative programs of re-evangelization in the continent. The sociological probability that Latin America will turn Protestant, in majority numbers, strikes me as culturally and statistically unlikely.

BOOKS

Thanks, but no thanks

BEYOND INNOCENCE AND REDEMPTION
Confronting the Holocaust and Israeli Power
Marc H. Ellis
Harper & Row, $21.95, 214 pp.

Leonard Fein

Marc Ellis offers us in his new book less a critique of Israel than an indictment of Israel; his is not a call for reform of Israeli practice but a demand for revision of Israeli principles, including the very first principle—that there is merit to the notion of Jewish self-determination. Its effect (I trust that Ellis would deny the intent) is the delegitimation of Israel.

The first thirty pages of Ellis's book are devoted to a searching critique of the uses the Jewish people in general and the state of Israel in particular have made of their suffering (the Holocaust/innocence) and their subsequent empowerment (Israel/redemption). The twin themes, he argues, have produced a theology that enables the Jews to evade responsibility for their (wretched) behavior. This opening argument might deserve to be taken more seriously did he not devote the rest of his book to a polemic against Israel, root and branch.

The root: "Solidarity with the Palestinian people," Ellis's principal commitment, "means *preparing for the transformation of the Jewish state into something else*, perhaps a confederation or even a unified state with autonomous and integrated communities" (emphasis added). Or, "The choice to pursue a *small or enlarged* Jewish state demands either subservience of the Arab population or, better yet, their disappearance into neighboring countries" (emphasis added). In other words, it is not Israel's control of or behavior in the territories, in the West Bank and Gaza, that is the problem; it is the very idea of a Jewish state. And why not? After all, "Jews are *essentially* a diaspora people who choose to live among the people of the world" (emphasis added). And what, therefore, is the place of Israel? "It may be that at this point a state organization of the Jewish community of Israel is important, but that hardly means forever."

The branch: In accents of sweet reason, Ellis puts forward a message of collective guilt: the collective guilt of the Jewish people. "Jews," Ellis informs us toward the end of his book, "are in danger of becoming everything we loathed about our oppressors."

What can such a sentence conceivably mean? Not merely "some Jews," but "Jews"; not merely "taking on some of the characteristics of our oppressors," but "becoming everything we loathed about our oppressors." Everything. Ellis inserts, as is his irritating habit, an exculpating qualifier: We are merely "in danger of becoming," we have not yet arrived. But the qualifier fails. The tone may be sorrowful, but it cannot conceal Ellis's animus toward Israel.

This we may discern from earlier passages in the book. So, for example, in discussing Jewish writings on "the connection between the Jewish experience of suffering in Europe and the Palestinian experience of suffering at the hands of the Jewish people in Palestine and Israel," Ellis starts by asserting that "it is important to see that [these] are not primarily comparisons between Nazi and Israeli behavior ...." (The right hand giveth.) Immediately, however, he qualifies: "...though some of the behavior may in fact be comparable.... What was done to the Jews is now being done by the Jews to another people." (And the left hand taketh away.)

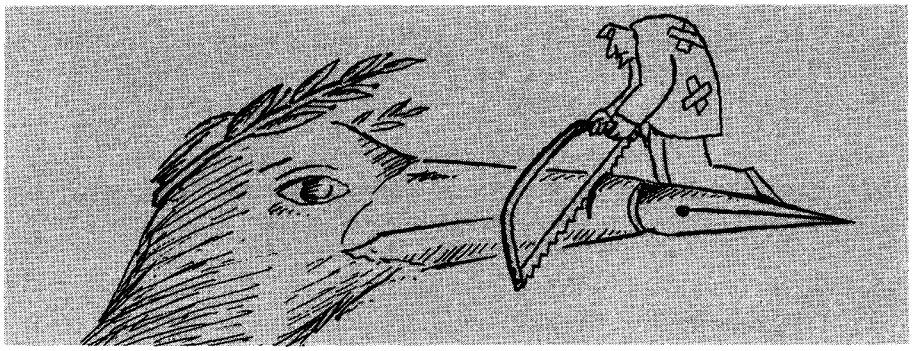
Yes, there are Israeli Jews whose behavior is indistinguishable from the behavior of the accursed Nazis. Yes, Israel's behavior toward the Palestinians is both stupid and wrong, and threatens to corrupt Israeli society. Yes, "it" can happen anywhere, even, may God help us all, in Israel. And yes, one terrible lesson we have learned from these years of conflict is that being Jewish offers no immunity against the follies and flaws which afflict all peoples.

But no. "No" not merely because the comparisons are odious, not even merely because they are mistaken nor because the line between criticism and delegitimation, a line the doves among us have never crossed, is a line that Ellis, taken as a whole, simply ignores.

"No," in the end, because Ellis commits and extends what we may think of as "the Begin error." In Menachem Begin's world, Arafat was Hitler; in 1982, as Begin presided over Israel's siege of Beirut, Beirut became for him Berlin, and that is what he said to the nation he misled.

I believe that Begin was sincere about all that, not consciously manipulative. And it may be that Marc Ellis is equally sincere when he inverts the Begin analogy, now placing the jackboot on Israel's foot. (Though the claim of sincerity is belied by the extraordinary selectivity in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



sources he cites.) But just as Begin was not merely wrong, but also dangerous, so, too, Ellis threatens to prolong the conflict he comes with such an annoying mixture of Jewish guilt and personal innocence to resolve.

It is not that his Jewish readers will take him seriously; his wild overstatements together with his manifest dislike for Israel ensure against that. Neither his critique nor his indictment is offered with love, with respect, with empathic sorrow, with any of the qualities that might cause us to pause and to listen. But Palestinian readers will find solace in his book, since it exonerates them of any and all responsibility for the conflict and places all but a handful of Israeli Jews on the docket. And what a docket! Not mistakes, not even crimes, but, because "what was done to the Jews is now being done by the Jews to another people," nothing less than crimes against humanity itself.

It may be too late to un-demonize the conflict. Both sides may be locked irretrievably into their nightmares. But surely those who sit on the sidelines and offer counsel and prescription have an obligation to try. The best that can be said about Ellis is that he does not fail. The unhappy reason for that, however, is that he does not even try.

Quite the contrary. In Ellis's simple view, the Palestinians are the oppressed, the Israelis the oppressors, and that is all one needs to know because that is all there is: "The reality of the Jews in Israel has been of a dominant conquering power displacing another people and seeking to make them disappear." Not "a" reality; "the" reality. Accordingly, Palestinian fears are real, Israeli/Jewish fears are a sham. Ellis has not a word to say about the wretched history of Palestinian and Arab terrorism and rejectionism; it is as if these things never were. To the Palestinians, therefore, understanding to the point of indulgence; to the Israeli Jews, only chastisement.

Did Ellis imagine that this people, the Jews, would rise up from the ashes and dust of the camps and in one graceful movement leap into the utopia of Zionism's poets? That was a common error; many of us made it. But it was an error rooted in decent hope, not in malevolence. Now we come to understand that we were bound to stumble along the way, and that yes, we have stumbled. And if it be more than that, if we have not merely stumbled but actually fallen, as Ellis maintains, is that not a tragedy? Yet there is no sense of the tragic here. There is only crime, and Original Sin.

Others offer therapy; Ellis proposes punishment. We are to become what we "essentially" are, a diaspora people that dismantles its home and "chooses to live among the peoples of the world." But since we are today incompetent to confront the truth about ourselves, Christians must offer and Jews must receive "critical solidarity," which Ellis defines as "confronting Jewish theology and policies that legitimate oppression." (One understands why such a confrontation might be regarded as "critical." But where, please, is the "solidarity"?)

The Christian burden is truly heavy: Ellis quotes with approval, even with enthusiasm, Arab theologians—Christian, not Moslem—who, as he puts it, believe that the solution for the Palestinian people lies "first of all" in "the Christian uncovering of the true vocation of the Jews, that is, spirit rather than nation-building and the integration of Jewish citizens by all nations."

Thanks, but no thanks. It is precisely this kind of language that creates an alliance between the sober doves with whom lies Israel's salvation and the Meir Kahanes of Israel. Never again will the Jews place their trust in a vocation defined for them by others, be that definition kind or cruel.

As it happens, Ellis's definition is cruel. It calls on us to forsake the pleasures of the flesh and the challenges of power in the name of "spirit." But the radical disjunction between body and soul (or spirit) is not recognized in our theology and, to the degree that it was a part of our experience, it was precisely that unnatural division that Zionism was meant to repair. Instead, Ellis proposes our redispersal; we are, he thinks, a "naturally" homeless people; let us offer ourselves to be "integrated" by all nations rather than persist in our own failed effort at nation-building. (The Palestinians, one presumes, have a different vocation. Else why not propose their integration by the Arab nations?)

Finally, having proposed homelessness for the Jews, Ellis complains of his own homelessness. He is upset that because of his critique of Israel, he is unwelcome in the American Jewish community, he has no place to call home. What he fails to understand is that within the reflective Jewish community, the essential distinction is not between Israel's critics and its cheerleaders; it is between those who are merely angry with Israel and those who are both angry with it and disappointed, even broken-hearted, by it. Many of us share Ellis's concerns regarding Holocaust theology, regarding Zionism's contradictions, regarding Israel's actions—but no, we lay no welcome mat for those, like Ellis, who allow themselves to feel the pain and the fear of others, but not our pain, our fear, and finally, our stubborn hope.

Ellis wants to stand on the shoulders of Martin Buber and Judah Magnes, but forgets that both of them chose to live in Israel; their solidarity with the Jewish people was never in doubt. And here in America, although those of us who live within the Jewish community and scold it from within are often rebuked, we are offered at least grudging respect. In turn, we are at least partially open to those who offer genuine critical solidarity. But shall we be open to one who sets himself so comprehensively and so disdainfully apart? □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OFF KEY & OFF THE MARK

WHY CATHOLICS CAN'T SING
The Culture of Catholicism and the Triumph of Bad Taste
Thomas Day
Crossroad, $19.95, 183 pp.

Rembert G. Weakland

The blurbs on the jacket of this book are meant to prepare one for the extraordinary contents it will hold. "Brilliant," Andrew Greeley calls it. "Brilliant, funny, insightful, and very much on target," Justus George Lawler asserts. "Extraordinarily original, provocative, and humorous," are Sidney Callahan's adjectives. William F. Buckley, Jr. is more circumspect: "(Day) asks important questions, and gives beguiling answers." (The first definition in my Webster for "beguiling" is "deceiving"! I wonder how Buckley meant it in this context?)

Let me cite some "beguiling" statements from the book. (I still cannot believe that Professor Day expects these remarks to be taken seriously, but these are but samples of a whole book full of *non sequiturs*.) The bad music that has infiltrated the Catholic church in our day, he states, is a feminist takeover: "If parishes want to send strong signals about the 'new' importance of women, they frequently think they have to do it by avoiding music which originated in the days when men controlled worship. The current unspoken consensus among many Catholics is that men contaminated the church's musical life for a millennium and a half." Greeley and William McManus (see *Catholic Contributions*, Thomas More Press) will be delighted to know that Professor Day—in an incredibly naïve passage for which no proof is available—has found the cause behind the drop in Catholic giving in these last decades: "It is entirely possible that a significant number of Catholic laypeople are dropping pennies into the collection basket, instead of dollars, and holding back on their singing because they resent being treated like tiny tots when they attend Mass. (My own hunch is that Catholics slice off a third of their donation whenever the priest begins Mass with 'Good morning,' and two-thirds if he begins with jokes and remarks about the weather.)" And on the scarcity of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, all vocation directors should take note of this assumption by Professor Day: "Why is the church running out of priests and nuns? There are hundreds of reasons and a small but significant one is music. When it comes to music, all too often the seminaries, convents, and monasteries take careful aim and then deliberately shoot themselves in the foot.... On a subconscious level, the music says that there is nothing special or distinctive or 'heroic' about the religious life." Other "cultural connections" that the reader might find "beguiling"—or just absurd—are also affirmed. So, for example, the musical style of the St. Louis Jesuits, the Dameans, and the Weston monks is pejoratively labeled the "Bauhaus" style becase of its presumed similarity, at least in the author's mind, to the architectural works of Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier.

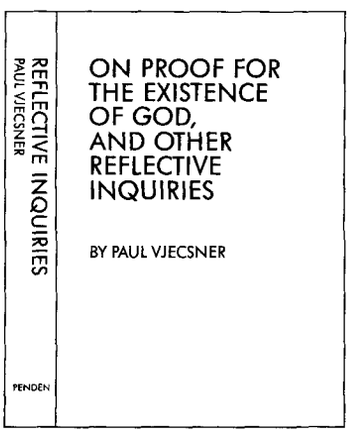
One of the lessons we have all learned from Andrew Greeley is the need to substantiate our hunches by solid statistical information, if they are to be taken seriously. Professor Day does not offer any proofs for these and other such "brilliant" observations.

Throughout the book Professor Day screams at the reader at the highest decibel possible. He rightly complains that such overamplified bellowing by cantors is precisely what happens during so many liturgies. It is sad that he does not recognize this same fault in his own writing. But the reader who is willing to wear earplugs and persevere till the end will find a morsel of worthwhile advice in the appendix. Some good practical suggestions are given there. At the beginning, too, there are some useful observations about the Irish influence in our past musical church culture here in the U.S.—observations valid at least on the East Coast.

Although the central themes of the book are never explicitly pulled together, the following statements sum up Professor Day's position as far as I am able to judge.

First, he rebels against the theory that there is a relationship between participation of the faithful in song and the building up

ON PROOF FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD, AND OTHER REFLECTIVE INQUIRIES
PAUL VJECSNER



"a painstaking effort" "The author sedulously presents his 'method of inquiry' and then four chapters: on language and concepts; on self, mind, and external reality; on logic and mathematics; and finally on the existence of God" "exercises of erudition, acumen, and reasoning skill" *Thought*, Fordham University

"wonderful book" "I have... read much in Chapter IV dealing with God. And I am fascinated" Prof. H. Odera Oruka, *Chairman* The Philosophical Association of Kenya

"a laborious study...produced a scholarly work" "The author [in] this...followed Sri Ramakrishna Maharaj's advice: 'If a single dive into the sea does not bring to you the pearl, do not conclude that the sea is without pearls. Countless are the pearls hidden in the sea' " "The writer has used his...prowess and training in producing a book [that] will be a great addition to any library and serve as a reference book for any serious student in the pursuit of his academic career" *Dharma*, Kuala Lumpur

264 pages, 85 diagrams, index, cloth bound, $20.00
ISBN 0-9619519-0-7
Send order for "Reflective Inquiries" to
PENDEN, P.O. Box 464, New York, N.Y. 10101

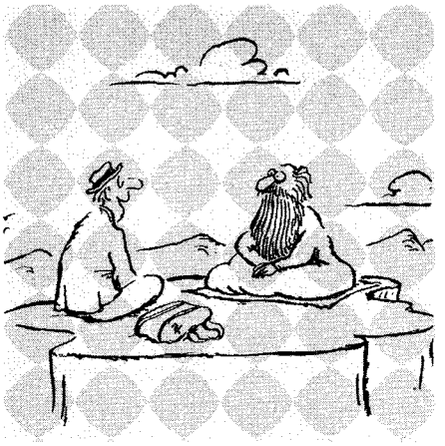
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of a faith community as found in the conciliar documents. He writes, for example: "The Orthodox churches and the Eastern Rites have compromised on this issue by not compromising. 'The people' simply go to 'the liturgy.' These ceremonies are a continuous fabric of singing. At certain points, the congregation weaves its own sound into the musical texture. (To be precise, those who wish to sing will sing; many will not make a sound.) It does not matter if a few worshippers contribute to the music or if everyone in the church sings. The liturgy is the liturgy." This espousal of individualism returns often in the book with a refusal to accept the recent trends toward the restoration of a communal dimension to liturgy. That music can unite a congregation was one of the most commonly held views by traditional church musicians and church authorities since the beginnings. In fact, Gregorian chant was often cited as the best example because of its single melodic line that all would sing together. (When Professor Day implies that the following phrase of mine, "that our song is our common twentieth-century response to God's word here and now," is totally lacking in any sense of the transcendent in liturgy but favors a "horizontalism," his criticism strikes me as simply ideological dishonesty and not worthy of reply.)

Second, Professor Day eschews all "warm" concepts of God in liturgy (to use Greeley's well-chosen word) in favor of fear and awe. How this change will affect singing in church eludes me.

Third, Professor Day rejects the classical views on Roman liturgy that were enunciated in the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* of the Second Vatican Council, especially in Article 34 where it is written: "The rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear, and unencumbered by useless repetitions; they should be within the people's powers of comprehension, and normally should not require much explanation." After citing this passage Professor Day continues: "Those are shining ideals, but it may take centuries to fix the wreckage caused by those few innocent words."

Fourth, Professor Day also rejects the idea of anyone "presiding" at the liturgy and sees the decision to celebrate the Mass facing the people as nothing but an ego trip on the part of the clergy. This point is made over and over again. The poor priests and their egos come in for quite a beating in the book. So, for example: "Somebody once said that 'ambition is the ecclesiastical lust,' the celibate clergy's substitute for sex. According to this theory, priests lust after promotion to pastor, pastors lust after promotion to bishop, and so on. But ambition, this old-fashioned sex substitute, is awfully tame stuff compared to the new salivating for liturgical attention." I can assure Professor Day—since he seems disinclined to check historical facts—that the priests of the world had absolutely nothing to do with the decision to have the celebrant face the congregation.



"If you really know the meaning of life we could make a fortune!"

Finally, Professor Day finds that only the older music of past centuries has the qualities needed for the liturgy. There are many places where he affirms the appropriateness of everything of the past—from Gregorian chant to polyphony to Mozart, Schubert, and Beethoven Masses. So many of these aesthetic judgments are historically very disputable. How Gregorian chant was experienced in its day—say from the eighth to the twelfth century—is not treated. It would have been instructive and balancing if Professor Day had reflected on the rise of troping and sequences and the constant intrusion of these "folk" elements into the liturgy in the past. I wonder if medieval contemporaries would have called their music "the other-worldly, mystical chant style." The following passage is even more bizarre: "The magnificent Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals, the overpowering grandeur of the Baroque basilicas, chant, Renaissance polyphony, the Masses of Haydn and Mozart (with orchestra), and all the rest were part of a desperate campaign to get 'the people' to shut up, to treat the church building as a sacred space." I searched the letters of Mozart to confirm this motive behind the writing of his Masses but have as yet not found the proof.

Professor Day almost defies anyone to review his book unfavorably: "The negative reaction to this book will follow a predictable format. The points that I have made—A, B, and C—will be ignored. I shall be excoriated for not mentioning D, E, and F (which do not fit into the limited scope of this book) and for implying G, H, and I (which are nowhere suggested in these pages)." But there are truly some glaring omissions which really should have fit into the scope of this book. The index shows that Michael Joncas is mentioned in five places (negatively, of course), but no reference to Alexander Peloquin can be found in the whole book. I consider it a remarkable feat to have written about church music in the postconciliar period without mentioning Peloquin even once. One will not find names such as Howard Hughes, Richard Hillert, Robert Kreutz, Ron Krisman, Gregory Murray, Erik Routley, Chrysogonus Waddell, and so many others. There is no discussion of the Masses by Proulx, Marty Haugen, or that of the "bells" by Peloquin, which—at least here in the Midwest—everyone sings. The result is a lopsided view written to irritate or be sensational.

But Professor Day is right about his main assertion: people are unhappy about music in the liturgy and disappointed with it. People do not sing. I wish he had researched why instead of giving us unfounded hunches. The situation is a sad one; the quality is often bad both in selection of material and in its execution.

The answers Professor Day comes up with are not very convincing because he does not ask the right questions and does not engage in a scientific investigation to find out the answers. The questions Professor Day should have posed are much deeper and less vitriolic. I would like to suggest a few insights that might take a different approach.

How many Americans sing the national anthem at public events? Most of the time

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it sounds as if they are in a Catholic church. One often says it is because of the high range of the second part of the piece. That might be true but is not a convincing response, since people will sing other pieces if they like them, even if the range is almost impossible. On college campuses, one finds that no one sings the college anthem either. The range there poses no problem.

What songs does one sing at home for special occasions? Unless one is Jewish, the only reply is "Happy Birthday." We do not have the repertoire that everyone learns as a child, songs that go with important ritual events of the year. We will gather, however, around the piano and sing old favorites if the occasion is right. But what are the old favorites for the present younger generation? Most of these songs are also restricted to Christmas themes. As a youngster we all knew many others that today have been forgotten, especially those by Stephen Foster. African-Americans still seem to know many songs that are part of their culture. I also marvel at the beauty of some of the Polish hymns that have survived here in Milwaukee, especially at funerals. What should those religious repertoires look like and how do we keep them alive?

What standard repertoire is taught—or should be taught—in our Catholic schools? Why are there no standard hymns that all Catholic children must learn from the cradle on? Other denominations seemed to have been able to do this in the past even without schools of their own. It would seem today that fewer and fewer have had the experience in school of singing in a chorus or in a choir. When budgets have to be tightened, music is the first to suffer, then comes the library, finally sports.

How often can a repertory change to be effectively learned? I sense that we, as congregations, are being fed far too much new music, more than we can possibly learn. Certain pieces, too, should be restricted to the season for which they were written. It is not good to sing the Paschal "Alleluia" every day, when it should be the high point of the Easter Vigil liturgy. Why, for example, do we have to change the antiphon that accompanies the responsorial psalm every Sunday in Lent or in Advent? Could not the choir part vary but that of the congregation stay the same for each Sunday?

Have we ever done a study of the acoustical surroundings and congregational singing? Our vast cavernous churches do not lend themselves to communal singing. Our voices get lost at once. Other churches seem to lend themselves to good singing. One hears oneself but also is sustained by one's neighbor.

What is the relationship between taste and congregational singing? This is a difficult question for which there is no easy answer without deeper study and research. We note, for example, that the quality of music sung by charismatic prayer groups is worse than that sung at official services in our churches, but these people do sing, regardless of how we might judge the quality of the music.

How much have we in our culture been influenced by TV? Do we come to church to be entertained as if we were home in front of the screen? Have we become a passive people when we are together, even in church, and expect others to provide for us? I need not enter into the whole question of our individualism and its cultural implications that also affect worship and communal singing.

Finally, the quality of church music, both in what is sung and how it is sung, will depend on our willingness to pay professionals to lead us. Music (and at times liturgy) in church has become the domain of amateurs. We did not notice it so much when, before the Second Vatican Council, our demands were fewer. My experience here in the Midwest is that the quality of music and the satisfaction of the congregation is commensurate with the amount invested by the parish in getting the services of professional musicians who are well trained in the needs and demands of liturgy.

Thus, I am convinced that the book telling us why Catholics don't sing has yet to be written. After reflecting on the numerous unsubstantiated observations in Professor Day's book and after pondering why so many obvious questions and factors are omitted, I believe, in honesty, I would have to call his attempt, not humorous, but insulting, not brilliant, but biased. Perhaps it is just "beguiling."

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY THEOLOGY

THEOLOGY MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

For more than 25 years, Marquette University has provided a tradition of excellence in graduate theology for lay men and women, clergy and religious. Committed to scholarship and dialogue within American Catholic theology, Marquette offers a diverse faculty nationally recognized in theological research.

PROGRAMS
- M.A. in Theology
- Ph.D. in Religious Studies

AREAS OF STUDY
- Biblical Theology
- Historical Theology
- Systematic Theology
- Theological Ethics
- Theology and Society

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
- Tuition Scholarships
- Teaching/Research Assistantships

For information write or call:
Marquette University
Department of Theology
Milwaukee, WI 53233 (414) 288-7170

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMMON SENSE SANCTIFIED

WISDOM DISTILLED FROM THE DAILY
Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today
Joan Chittister, O.S.B.
Harper & Row, $15.95, 216 pp.

Robert P. Imbelli

Over the past several years, *Commonweal* has published an occasional series entitled "The Laity and the Life of Faith." I have enjoyed and profited from the excellent contributions, both the experiences recounted and the careful and discerning reflections brought to bear on those experiences. Indeed, in my own musing upon the pieces, the common thread that weaves them into a fine tapestry can be indicated by the two virtues: *integrity* and *discernment*. Those seeking to live out the life of faith, in the midst of secular responsibilities and commitments, strive to achieve that integrity of word and deed, private and public, familial and institutional, that is the peculiar demand of holiness. And they recognize that the royal road to the goal is a self-critical and unremitting discernment; one that, in the face of our tendency to self-deception, requires the humble and sincere consultation of others, whether spouse, friends, or associates, regarding motives, enterprises, and consequences.

Mulling over these matters, one is led to wonder whether what is crucial is not so much the different modalities that may distinguish a more "lay" oriented as contrasted with a more "monastic" style of spirituality (significant as these may be), as the common principles and values that join them both in the one life of discipleship: the one life of Christian faith lived in different registers.

A compelling claim of Joan Chittister in her new book, *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily*, is that the foundational vision of the *Rule of Saint Benedict* lends itself to secular as well as monastic embodiment. Indeed, the qualities of heart and mind that the *Rule* seeks to promote are precisely those most needed by a wastefully consumerist and exploitative society. Respect for things and reverence for persons—the kitchen vessels treated with the same honor as the altar vessels, the guest greeted as though Christ himself were present—connote attitudes as much at home in the high-rise as in the monastery.

Perhaps the attitude most central to the *Rule*, as Chittister experiences and exegetes it, is that of *mindfulness*. She writes: "Each of us has been given something to keep well: a small garden, a tiny room, a simple apartment, our bodies. That much, surely, we could take care of mindfully." What delights in such common sense wisdom dis-

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
announces the opening of a
Ph.D. PROGRAM in THEOLOGY
with specializations in New Testament & Early Christianity and Christian Ethics

ADMISSION

Admission is limited to full-time students in the Fall semester only. Application deadline is April 1.

PROGRAM

The curriculum focuses on the distinctive resources of the Roman Catholic theological tradition and places them in an ecumenical dialogue with the faith and theology of other major Christian traditions.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Research assistantships, tuition scholarships, and a limited number of fellowships are available to new and continuing students. Applications for these awards are due by February 1.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

For More Information, Please Write To:
Director of Graduate Programs
Department of Theology
Loyola University of Chicago
6525 N. Sheridan Rd.
Chicago, IL 60626

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It's neither the new church nor the old church that will save us—in other words, not the right wing or the left wing of anything. It is wisdom alone, those insights into the truth of life that are distilled from the Gospel and personal experience, that we must look to for guidance, not the latest in spiritual gimmicks or psychological schools or easy-come, easy-go gurus. Benedict knows that what we need is wisdom, but too often we let ourselves settle for less. We want quick fixes instead of the slow and steady truth of life well lived.

—Joan Chittister, O.S.B.
Wisdom Distilled from the Daily

tilled from the daily is the contrast it affords with our inflated expectations about "spirituality." Like Naaman, the Syrian, we are geared for spectacular undertakings, but hardly prepared for the demands of the daily. Yet, the everyday, mindfully engaged, provides asceticism enough for most of us; and, perhaps, our only access to the mystical.

A characteristic sign of the radical and rare common sense that pervades the *Rule* is the attention accorded the common meal. Here young and old, stranger and familiar, dependent and provider, gather in common fellowship for nourishment of body and of spirit. "Here, at the common table, all our care and work for one another is made tangible." And the demise of the common table and the family meal, in the land of Burger King and Pizza Hut, is another sad index of our growing spiritual poverty, as privacy displaces community and individual agendas compromise the common good. Lest the above be dismissed as reactionary religious nostalgia, it pays to recall the remarks of Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, who sounds an alarm concerning the spiritual crisis confronting many of our nation's children whose lives lack the ritual and order provided in the past by the common family meal.

Though it may only reflect my own progressive "quieting down," I found the book gaining strength as it went on. In many respects, chapter thirteen, "Monastic Practices: The Way of Conversion," serves as a fine resumé of the whole. Here again Benedict's sanctified common sense speaks clearly. Practices are not an end in themselves; their purpose is to serve the self's transformation in Christ. On the other hand, it is fantasy to pretend that one can make do without practices that enflesh the intentions and aspirations of spirit. Chittister helps us realize how supple are the practices that the *Rule* recommends; how adaptable to nonmonastic environments. She offers a helpful and legitimate "social" reading of the *Rule*; yet she is equally firm in her conviction that "it is *what we are* while we are doing whatever it is we do that makes Benedictine spirituality a gift for all ages." If, at times, her own presentation grows repetitive or flirts with the moralistic, it is quickly redeemed by the wonderful Christocentric objectivity and terse spiritual balance of Benedict's *Rule*.

A final feature of the book I would commend is its consideration of authority—surely a spiritual reality that needs to be reappropriated. Chittister affirms simply, but profoundly: "The role of authority in Benedictine spirituality is to unify the community and to direct its attention to God who is the center of life of each and all of them." Assuredly; but what a demanding and self-transcending program lies therein! For to apprehend that Center, "the point of intersection of the Timeless with time" (in Eliot's phrase), requires, to return to our starting point, all the integrity and discernment we, secular or monastic, can muster. Or, better, all any of us can receive as gift.

At the conclusion of his acclaimed study, *After Virtue*, the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre expressed his hope for the appearance, in this new age of barbarism, of "a new, doubtless different, Benedict." To which, I suspect, Joan Chittister would utter a fervent "amen"; though she might add, for the sake of inclusiveness, "or Scholastica"! □

LOVE BETWEEN THE PAGES

POSSESSION
A Romance
A.S. Byatt
Random House, $22.95, 555 pp.

Fanny Howe

The first thing to say about this book is that is transports the reader—for many sublime hours—to the realms of gold. Its subject—possession—has various angles, and not one remains unexamined. Who owns whom in this world? What is a possession and what is unpossessable? Can a person, even in these secular times, be possessed by the spirit-life? These are the kinds of questions A.S. Byatt tackles wholeheartedly. It is a wonderful thing to read a novel of ideas and one which has a range of tones. The monotone novel is strange to our times, and our country.

The story belongs to one man mainly—Roland, a young scholar who has the slightly broken manner of the working-class person in contemporary London. He works for a pompous professor, researching the life and times of a famous Victorian poet, R.H. Ash. The story begins like a good detective story, with Roland's unexpected discovery—the existence of a passionate correspondence between the poet Ash and another poet, Christabel LaMotte. Roland's discovery, which he keeps secret, brings him into contact with another scholar—a feminist theorist and very distant relation of LaMotte—Maud; and together Maud and Roland embark on a search that turns up one amazing fact after another.

The book becomes a hall of mirrors, with the love story of Ash and LaMotte unfolding through letters and diaries. Meantime Roland and Maud are being pursued by scholars who believe the letters

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are properly their own possessions, and the two of them lose possession of themselves, and of their personal lives. The adherence to traditional forms of plotting and revealing makes all of these genres (including many pages of poems by LaMotte-Ash-Byatt) into pleasurable indulgences; they are propelled by plot. Those unwritten bedroom scenes between Victorian couples are here exposed and explored, but without prurience. Byatt's sense of humor returns as a sense of taste.

The book begins as satire, from which only Roland is exempt. In ways the novel is reactionary in its contempt for feminism and, too, in its fundamental desire to recover that lost and well-loved world ("dear old England") that we have come to associate, here, with colonialism and snobbery. LaMotte is clearly a composite (and sometimes irritating) portrait of Emily Dickinson. Ash seems to be modeled mostly on Wordsworth. His absorption in philosophies of nature and spirit are beautifully transcribed and explored. Ash, like Roland, is exempted from satire; these two men are taken more seriously than any other characters in the story.

The whole vocabulary of the Victorian world is restored and given to us as a kind of paradise of speech. As Ash pokes around the rivers and forests, he stands for the imminent destruction of nature, thanks to such curiosity; he stands, like the painters of the Hudson Valley school, at a pinnacle in history, looking onto an untrammeled landscape, where smoke rises in the distance as a threat. What this novel does is valuable: it shows us the outcome of curiosity. The contemporary world—with its secular aborted love affairs and career suspicions, the prices of liberated minds and bodies won at a great cost—seems gross and noxious indeed compared with the nineteenth-century landscape, both as fact and as language.

The two poets, Ash and LaMotte, share visions of a transcendent creation, beginning with nymphs and water (à la Hans Christian Andersen and Social Darwinism) and ending with the insistence on emotion and necessity (i.e., sex) as being at the heart of all forward motion. They act out their visions on each other, with tragic results. But their sacrifice nonetheless has in it the nobility of a belief system that elevates its own self-definition to the realm of the ecstatic. What you call an experience really decides how you live with it. This book proposes that the old vocabulary may be the gold that we have abandoned prematurely. Given the range of tongues, the attention to each sentence and image and idea, this is a great read, and a book to return to, after your curiosity has been satisfied by the unfolding dramas. □

REVIEWERS

LEONARD FEIN, *a veteran observer of Israel, is a leader of the "peace camp" within the American Jewish community. He is the author of* Where Are We? The Inner Life of America's Jews *(Harper & Row).*

REMBERT G. WEAKLAND, O.S.B., *is a graduate of Juilliard School of Music and Columbia University and was appointed archbishop of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1977, by Pope Paul VI.*

ROBERT P. IMBELLI, *a priest of the Archdiocese of New York, is director of the Institute of Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry at Boston College.*

FANNY HOWE *teaches at the University of California in San Diego.*

DENNIS O'BRIEN *is president of the University of Rochester. His most recent book is* God and the New Haven Railway *(Beacon).*

MARTIN E. MARTY *is Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago, senior editor of the* Christian Century, *and author of many books on American religion and culture.*

THEOLOGY OF SOUND BITES

UNDER GOD
Religion and American Politics
Garry Wills
Simon & Schuster, $24.95, 445 pp.

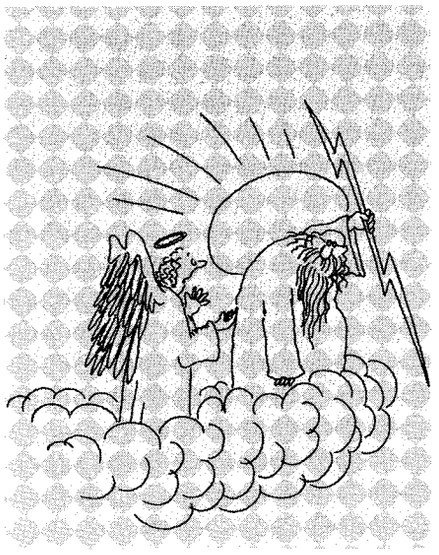
Dennis O'Brien

What do Plutarch, Pocahontas, Dan Quayle, and John Nelson Darby all have in common? Answer: they are all featured players in Garry Wills's wide-screen saga of religion in and out of American politics. And not the least of these is John Nelson Darby. Who? Thereby hangs whatever there is of a tale in Wills's treatment of whatever it is that he is after in his current work.

Under God is quite delectable if ultimately indigestible. I enjoyed every chapter and would gladly reread it from beginning to end or end to beginning — it would make no great difference. Ostensibly the book seems to be about the most recent presidential election and the religious backgrounds and foregrounds of the principal candidates. There were two up-front preachers in the lists: Jesse Jackson and Pat Robertson. A former seminarian: Gary Hart, and two finalists desperately seeking salvation at the polls by rediscovering religion. George Bush courted Jim Bakker and Tammy Faye and while not quite "born again" was willing to aver "Jesus Christ is my personal savior" for the benefit of Bible-belt voters. Michael Dukakis surprised the nation (and himself) by being the first presidential candidate who was Greek Orthodox.

It is a tossup in Wills's account who comes off worse among the front runners on the use and abuse of religion in the late campaign. Bush is viewed as unprincipled in his willingness to exploit any sacred symbol for office: the flag or the "theology of Willy Horton"—to use Wills's phrase for the suppressed "Satanism" of that despicable campaign tactic. But if Bush was unprincipled in waving sacred symbols, he at least knew their power. Dukakis, on the other hand, emerges as a pitiful figure—as awkward in the dense religious world of American aspirations as in a tank helmet. Dukakis is, in Wills's view, the consummate modernist figure, an ascetic rationalist, a fixer of problems who sells competence in office when the electorate seeks transcendence.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"Not America. Think of the lawsuits."

Does the electorate really seek transcendence? Wills begins his text with the opinion poll proof that the United States is the most religious nation on earth. Americans preponderantly believe in God, go to church, expect a life after politics. The bulk of the book goes well beyond Mr. Gallup, however, and therein lies its fascination. John Maynard Keynes may have said the only famous thing ever said by an economist when he noted, "Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back." Wills's thesis would substitute theologians for economists. The frenzy of our political process is the distillation of theological scribblers great and small. Wills's inspiration is to take the theological background seriously as an explanation and expansion of political sound bites.

Enter John Nelson Darby of whom it is said, "probably no Christian thinker in the last two hundred years has so affected the way in which English-speaking Christians view the faith, and yet has received so little recognition of his contribution...." Darby (1800-1882) founded the Plymouth Brethren and was godfather to a line from Dwight Moody to Hal Lindsey of *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Darby's thing was eschatology and it is the millenarian hopes and fears that are continually played in our politics. From John Winthrop's vision of America as the City on the Hill, the new Jerusalem, to Ronald Reagan's suggestion of Armageddon in his labeling of the Antichrist, the Evil Empire, Americans with or without church have dreamed transcendent dreams about the country. Dukakis the mechanic never understood the essential spiritual territory of "practical" politics.

If millenarianism is the underlying theme of religion in American politics, it is also the literary trope of *Religion in American Politics*. The book has been criticized as no book at all — a fascinating phantasmagoria of insights and ironies but hardly a sustained argument. This is true enough. One hardly knows who will turn up from chapter to chapter, paragraph to paragraph. A complex analysis of St. Augustine may be followed by a discussion of William Jennings Bryan. (The chapters on Bryan and the Scopes trial are among the most compelling of the ironies. Bryan turns out to be the hero.) One would search far and wide for Wills's literary model, if any. Let me suggest the millenarian *Revelations:* present things are seen as the types of last things, individuals act mythic roles, commercials are the distant distillations of *The City of God*.

Wills has written a series of books in which present politicians are aggrandized beyond their own recognition by taking their ideas more seriously than they would probably wish. Richard Nixon was pseudo-Samson in *Nixon Agonistes*, Ronald Reagan a misplaced Tom Sawyer in *Reagan's America: Innocents at Home*. In the current effort, Gary Hart is Don Giovanni, Michael Dukakis is Euripides' Hippolytus, Pat Robertson is a falsified Robert E. Lee. Individuals are judged by their archetypes — and usually come off wanting. Only Jesse Jackson, who has a sure sense of his myth, fulfills his mission. One can conclude from Wills's various efforts that American politics is both shallower and deeper than it appears. It is deeply rooted but since its practitioners are so oblivious of the depths, their efforts seem all that more superficial. Whether *Under God* cheers or depresses the reader about the seriousness of our national spirit, it makes wonderful reading. □

PRAYER WORK PLACE

SAINT JOHN'S

COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA

A Summer Tradition

June 24 - August 2, 1991

6 WEEK COURSES:
Introduction to Christian Tradition - Michael Vertin
Christology - Carl Peter
Exegetical Methodology - Dale Launderville, OSB
Luke/Acts - Richard Dillon
Seminar: The Parables of Jesus - Sarah Sharkey, OP
Monastic History II - Eric Hollas, OSB
Rule of Benedict - Mary Forman, OSB
Contemporary Christian Mysticism - Herwig Arts, SJ
Introduction to Liturgiology - Michael Kwatera, OSB
Rites of Christian Initiation - Maxwell Johnson
Seminar: Mass of the Roman Rite - Helen Rolfson, OSF
Psalmody/Hymnody - Don Saliers
Applied Organ - Kathy Handford
Applied Voice - Carolyn Finley
Service Organ Playing - Robert LeBlanc
Service Leadership for Canto/Song - Robert LeBlanc

6 WEEKS IN JERUSALEM:
Biblical History & Sites - James Fleming
Gospel of Matthew - Donald Rapé

1-6 WEEK COURSES:
Wisdom - Irene Nowell, OSB
Trinity - Randall Morris
Spiritual and Psychological Foundations of Pastoral Ministry - Wendy Robinson
Youth Ministry - Michael Horan
Catechesis & The Word of God - Jane Regan
Monastic Institute - Daniel Ward,OSB, et al.
Preaching Workshop - Alvin Rueter
Symposium on Liturgy & Social Justice -

Since 1857, Saint John's University has offered programs of study and pastoral preparation within a praying community and a setting of natural beauty.

For information, contact:
Mary Beth Banken, O.S.B.
Associate Director of Admissions, Room 217
School of Theology, Saint John's University
Collegeville, MN 56321
612-363-2102

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RIDING A THESIS OVER A CLIFF

THE ARROGANCE OF FAITH
Christianity and Race in America from the Colonial Era to the Twentieth Century
Forrest G. Wood
Alfred A. Knopf, $29.95, 517 pp.

Martin E. Marty

If only ....

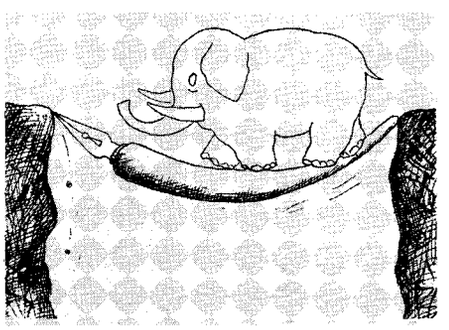
If only I could write two reviews of this book. One would be an appreciation of the story Forrest G. Wood has to tell, a story of almost unrelenting expressions of racism by white Christian Americans. Theodor Adorno has said that we dishonor sufferers by not telling their story; we increase our humanity by hearing it. The story of human suffering caused by slavery and segregation in America is of immeas-urable scope. It always demands and deserves more retellings. Wood has done extensive research, knows the secondary literature, and writes with sufficient flair to hold reader interest.

On the other hand, a second review would turn to the second book within Wood's covers. That one is an unrelenting dismissal of faith by one who is evidently a former Christian, still working out his case against Christianity. As he does so, he tears Christian expressions out of their contexts. It is hard from this account to know why anyone who was not pathological ever turned to Christianity for prodding or solace, prophetic nudges, or consoling hopes. The faith comes off as a calculated and calculating instrument for ideological suppression, by its white adherents, of blacks, Native Americans, Asians, and anyone else who did not fit.

The book is itself an expression of ideology, at once snide and condescending. It is uninformed by any nuances of comparative religion or cultural studies. As Wood accuses others of racism, it is in place to accuse him of faithism. African and Chinese religions, Native American faiths, Buddhism and Hinduism, and polytheisms in general are off the hook—a sign that Wood romanticizes them or does not know them "up close." Monotheist faith in general and Christianity in particular never gets a chance.

Wood thinks that the racism of Christianity "has been so pervasive that it has always escaped the full force of criticism, a situation encouraged by the fact that the true believer is not likely to acknowledge—or even recognize—the errors of his faith." While criticism was always a minority voice and one which came late, it has been probing and profound. Wood might dismiss the eloquent Christian prophets as other than "true believers," but that would be to change the rules of the game. After citing the missionary impulse as the driving force behind Christian subjugation of other people—and an unmistakably strong force it was—Wood admits, "after all, it is unfair to condemn the sins of Christianity without at least acknowledging the sins of all societies whose oppressed classes have owned their condition to the power of religion." But why "the power of religion"? Oppressed classes have owned their condition also to the power of nonreligion as well. Look around.

If only such a book did not put a great burden on a reviewer. I would expect non-Christians to holler "Enough!" in the course of their reading and reviewing. The Christian who knows something of the story, is aware of and acknowledges and deeply regrets the flaws in the faith community, is especially on the spot. To overlook the ideological character of Wood's writing would be to give an unfair and misguiding account of the book. To reject it leaves one vulnerable to the charge of insensitivity or, worse, the writing of apology for the Christian faith at the expense of one's historical and critical sensibilities.



If only the book did not give such appearances of mastery and definitiveness. It weighs in with great heft as a contender alongside classics like Winthrop Jordan's *White Over Black*, and takes up themes matching H. Shelton Smith's durable *In His Image, But...*. By its seriousness and appearance it bids fair to be around for a long time, to be consulted as a reference or read as an epic tragedy. Yet: what picture will new generations of readers carry from it of a faith community which displays complexities, ambiguities, and paradoxes which are overlooked here, along with all too rarely expressed virtues Wood would not dare to mention?

Wood has taken more from his Christian heritage than he knows. He has read the texts, engaged in a proper "hermeneutics of suspicion," found bad ideals followed and good ideals traduced—the way good Christians are supposed to seek and find them. He has taken over a literary form from the Puritans he so despises: the jeremiad. But they operated out of some sense of covenant which could call people of conscience to an accounting. It is hard to see on what basis Wood would form or find a covenant for improving things. On Marxist-Leninism? Think of the gulags. Marxism pure and simple? Show us where. Enlightenment rationalism? Its advocates were as racist and enslaving as were the Christians they would replace.

Again and again Wood takes the reader aside to give lectures on scholarship. He dismisses some scholars because they have a "religious bias" and thus could not be scholarly, evidently not recognizing that an "antireligious bias" could also skew scholarship. From the prophetic tradition he has taken another habit: to see himself virtually "alone in Israel," solitary in his faithful witness. Most of the giants in the discipline—Winthrop P. Jordan, Perry Miller, Sydney Ahlstrom, and their kind—get called to task for not seeing things as Wood sees them.

Why did West Africans adopt two mis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sionary religions, Christianity and Islam, even in circumstances of slavery? This may have been "the result of an apparently unique West African susceptibility to external religious influences." Such language about "unique susceptibilities" itself verges on culturalism or racism, but any instrument evidently will do to explain away what often turned out to be free choices by slaves. For all the evils of the enslavers' faiths, West Africans in the American South found ways to do a kind of jiujitsu translation—using the force of the Christian power that was directed at them, against itself, to their advantage. Their innovative enterprise gets little credit; their "unique susceptibility" gets the blame.

If only....If only Wood could rewrite his book with confidence in his story and less condescension toward his readers. The story is one of horror and terror, too rarely interrupted by nobility and hope. It is a story that needs no help from an ideology which, in the end, distracts from the point. And then, if only I could review that version of his plot, I could say the good things about it that the violence of his writing here too consistently obscures.

IN BRIEF

GOD, COUNTRY, NOTRE DAME, *by Theodore M. Hesburgh, Doubleday, $21.95, 274 pp.*

While many a present-day autobiography is an account of a personal quest, Father Hesburgh presents rather a story of the way he was caught up in the big issues from the sixties on. He rarely tells explicitly of his intimate feelings. An exception is the way he writes of his love for his priestly vocation and of his devotion to his daily offering of the Mass. And there is the case of his hobby of flying in fast planes.

Now for the issues that have so strongly engaged him: First, there is his important role in the starting of the Peace Corps, a prime example of "service to others." Then, later in the sixties, Father Hesburgh takes on the student revolt as it strikes his beloved Notre Dame. Soon afterward he becomes involved in the civil rights movement at its most precarious stage. He also finds himself called upon to defend the cause of academic freedom. And he comes to play a key role in the reaching of an atomic arms agreement and in lessening tensions between our country and the Soviet Union—and there is more. In large part this is an exciting story of the crises of our times.

With all the salient missions he undertook in this country and overseas and the many executive roles in which he functioned year after year, Father Hesburgh's primary concern and the major part of his activities encompassed the remarkable academic and spiritual development of the University of Notre Dame. He was indeed involved in the many-sided social progress he cites with such satisfaction. Completed just months before the trauma of the Persian Gulf, the book is basically optimistic. Father Hesburgh says that each one of us can do something effective in the cause of a better world. *God, Country, Notre Dame* itself embodies an obvious refutation of the apathetic notion that "in the modern world one person cannot make a difference." E.S.S.

Graduate Degrees and Opportunities for Continuing Education

- Program of Spirituality
- Ministries Development Program
- Mission and Cross-cultural Studies

WASHINGTON THEOLOGICAL UNION

A Roman Catholic School for Ministry

"The WTU is a creative response to a real need in the post-Vatican II Church, the need for a theologically educated laity who really are the Christian ministers to the world."

"Special programs in Spirituality, Word and Worship, and Mission and Cross-cultural Studies are examples of imaginative developments in the school."

"The atmosphere at the school is warmly human—people feel that they are treated with personal interest and concern."

—Michael J. Scanlon, O.S.A., S.T.D. Chairman Department of Systematic Theology

For further information contact:
WASHINGTON THEOLOGICAL UNION
Dept. of Institutional Advancement
9001 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20903-3699
(301) 439-0551

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Pilgrims' progress

Lawrence S. Cunningham

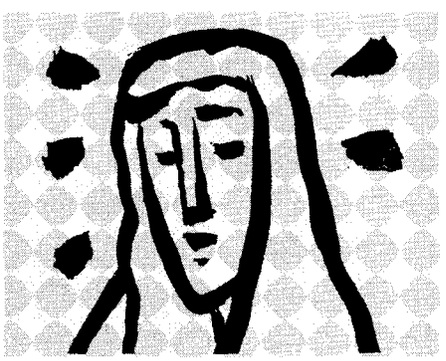
I have already confessed, in these notes, to a weakness for anthologies of prayers. Those who suffer from a similar weakness will well wish to include Sister Miriam Winter's anthology in their collection. There are two large sections in this book. In the first part are liturgies of the Word for every woman mentioned in the New Testament from the privileged persons of Mary and Elizabeth to the slave woman of Phillippi and the unnamed wife of Pilate. Each of these brief liturgies has a lectionary reading and a choral recitation between narrator and chorus as well as some points for shared reflections and prayer.

WomenWord: A Feminist Lectionary and Psalter, *by Miriam Therese Winter, Crossroad, $16.95, 319 pp.*

The second section of the book comes not after the first but interspersed with it: a series of psalms, deriving from the liturgy, with wonderfully pertinent titles such as a psalm for abused women; for women of faith; for working women; for mothers and daughters; for women who give birth; and so on.

My suspicion is that this book (with strong illustrations by Meinrad Craighead) will find a wide readership among religious women and, further, among everyone who actively works in pastoral ministries. Soon, one suspects, we will be hearing these prayers in some parish churches. The book, however, deserves another readership: those who preach, teach, and study the Scriptures in particular and theology in general. Sister Winter has read the New Testament closely but with the spectacles of a Christian feminist. Her insights and formulations give us new angles of vision on the Scriptures and a welcome resource for celebrating those insights in private and public prayer. It is far more satisfactory than the devotions/prayers/liturgies in Rosemary Ruether's *Women-Church* (1985), whose formulations were marred by a lot of now dated political editorializing as well as a tin ear for language.

That there were women deacons in the New Testament church is clear (see: Rom. 16:1); that they functioned in the patristic church both East and West is also clear. The question is: Should this office be restored in the contemporary Roman Catholic church as it has been in other branches of the Christian family? Some feminists argue against the diaconate, noting that it would only bring women into the present clerical setup albeit marginally while others see it as a foot in the door for those who seek the ordination of women. There is a third factor to be considered: There are now many married permanent deacons whose wives went through the training with them and who, in many instances, serve nonordained ministerial functions in all phases of pastoral life. Why should they not be formally ordained to an office which has roots in the New Testament itself? Or, again, why do not those women, married and not, who serve as pastoral associates in parishes and institutions (hospitals, etc.) not have the sacramental empowerment to preach, baptize, and so on?



Those issues are raised in the slight book (really a pamphlet fleshed out in the middle section with some short testimonies of women who minister in various capacities) by Ratigan and Swidler. The most important parts of the book are the opening section which sets out the various sides of the argument on the issue of women deacons and the final section on the historical background of the issue and some contemporary reflections on the permanent diaconate from a variety of perspectives.

I am pleased to have had the chance to read this book because it caused me to think about an issue in such a new way (my assumption was that women would desire the restoration of the diaconal function and that they had tradition on their side for such an office) that I must think about what *diakonia* means; how it is related to orders; and how this all fits into the issue of the ordination of women. That women have the historic right to the office of deacon seems clear; that it is desirable to have women deacons as complete equals to those men in the permanent diaconate also seems patent; that this office is not open to them seems mean-spirited and petty. What this all means in terms of women priests (the issues, after all, are discrete ones) is something I must think about.

A New Phoebe: Perspective on Roman Catholic Women and the Permanent Diaconate, *edited by Virginia Kaib Ratigan and Arlene Anderson Swidler, Sheed & Ward, $7.95, 110 pp.*

In 1985 Mary Jo Weaver, in her book *New Catholic Women,* called for a history of the church in the United States which would do full justice to the place of women. Kenneally's work is one attempt to answer that call. Unlike the volume in the bicentennial series on American Catholic history, this is a coherent narrative from the colonial period down to the eve of Vatican II. Of necessity, the book must move both briskly and selectively because Kenneally not only

LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM *teaches theology at the University of Notre Dame.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tells the story of Catholic women (or, better: a selected number of them) but also, and, of necessity, the attitude of Catholic men (especially clergymen) about women since they were the wielders of power and the shapers of policy.

I am not enough of an historian to know if Kenneally tells the story with accuracy

The History of American Catholic Women, *by James K. Kenneally, Crossroad, $24.95, 286 pp.*

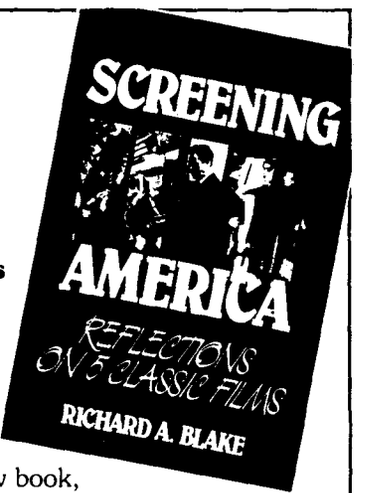
and fidelity to the sources. What I do know is that he tells it vigorously and with a point of view: women reached their independence (to the degree that they have reached it) with precious little aid from the male half of the church. Kenneally's history is a history of opposition to those women who wished to work outside the home; to those who wished to vote; to the notion of total acceptance in graduate education; to coeducation; to sex education; to nuns who wished to control their own religious communities; to religious women who wished to become doctors; and so on. Counterpoised to that story are the women who in some cases agreed totally with the traditional role of women and those who opposed or, more commonly, worked around such strictures. Kenneally tells us of those women in short vignettes but with a good narrative line, and he is especially good in his survey of literature written for and by women as indicators of changing attitudes.

Longing for Darkness: Tara and the Black Madonna, *by China Galland, Viking, $21.95, 392 pp.*

China Galland left the Catholic church after an unhappy encounter with a marriage tribunal (alas, an all too frequent occurrence with an organism which many of us would like to see radically changed) following on a failed marriage at an early age. Her deep desire for a centered spirituality led her on a decade-long search for spiritual nourishment; a nourishment that she would find by her encounter with Tara, a Buddhist figure who found enlightenment *as a woman* in the past and who could serve as a spiritual figure for other women. That Tara was represented as a dark figure led Galland on a parallel search for the origins of the Dark Madonnas of her Catholic past. This drew her to Poland where she made the pilgrimage to the Dark Madonna at Jasna Gora and to the Swiss monastic shrine of Einsiedeln. She seems to have come full circle in South Texas where she finds the activist Christians who work with undocumented Hispanics under the banner of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Still committed to her Buddhist spiritual discipline, she seems to have found some sense of reconciliation with her native place (she is a Texan) and her natal religion.

I must confess to a certain ambivalence with this book despite my love for travel literature (and Galland does a lot of trav-

To understand America, simply look at its films



SCREENING AMERICA:
Reflections On Five Classic Films
by Richard A. Blake
introduction by Andrew Greeley

The relationship of the Hollywood cinema to American culture is so close, Richard Blake says, that to understand America, simply look at its films. In his new book, Richard Blake, for over a decade a film reviewer for *America*, makes serious film criticism accessible to all. He shows the reader *how* to critique a film. He explains the difference between reviewing and critiquing, looks at specific criticism techniques, then applies those techniques to five benchmark movies.

The book first provides a quick history of film criticism, which had its origins in religious communities concerned about the effect of film on its viewers. It traces two critical schools—auteur criticism and genre criticism—and then applies the various methods of film criticism to *It Happened One Night, Scarface, Stagecoach, The Maltese Falcon,* and *Frankenstein.*

These five films were made during a single ten-year period. They represent five different reflections on the changes in this country from the Depression to just before WWII. They also present five different investigations of critical film methods. Blake looks at each film from auteur criticism, including biographical and artistic information about the director, and from genre criticism. And for each of the five, Blake includes a comprehensive plot summary, making an already highly readable book self-contained for anyone unfamiliar with a particular film.

Richard A. Blake, S.J., is Associate Professor of English at LeMoyne College in Syracuse, and an associate pastor at St. Mary's Church in Hamilton, New York. The author of dozens of articles for *America* and other journals, he has also written *The Lutheran Milieu of the Films of Ingmar Bergman.* **Paper $14.95**

PAULIST PRESS
997 Macarthur Blvd., Mahwah, NJ 07430 • 201-825-7300

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SAINT MARY
T·H·E W·O·O·D·S
COLLEGE

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN
PASTORAL THEOLOGY

"I wanted the theological education and I wanted it with a pastoral emphasis. I work full-time."

Commander William Ditewig, USN
Bowie, Maryland

■

External Degree Format

Basic theological concepts and methods related to ministry.

Development of personal spirituality with the knowledge and skills to assist others.

Practical application of specific skills essential for ministry.

Limited time on campus. The external degree format begins with a weekend on campus, followed by work at home in regular consultation with professors. Three weekends and one 8-day summer session each year are the only on-campus requirements.

■

"The program affords me the luxury of integrating home church and professional life."

Sheila Gilbert
Indianapolis, Indiana

For more information contact:
Graduate Office-Guerin Hall
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876
812-535-5206

eling). I have some skepticism about spiritual seeking in San Francisco and Cambridge (she sat *zazen* in the former; sought spiritual counsel in the latter); the skepticism became pronounced when Tara and the Virgin get frothed up in the Jungian cuisinart; and peaked when I realized that Galland was parking her children with various relatives while taking off for Katmandu, India, and so on to seek "enlightenment." That she was a spiritual seeker, I have no doubt. That she overcame addiction, alcoholism, and shaky marriages is to be applauded. That she has made peace with her past is a sign of hope. One wonders whether she might have done just as well had she listened to the admonition of Pascal who warned that most of the world's problems could be solved if people would only learn to stay in their rooms.

Dan Wakefield is a well-known writer who is rapidly become better known as a religious writer. Having already published an account of his own spiritual journey, he now writes about how others can put down on paper their own spiritual autobiography. *The Story of Your Life* is partially a "how to" manual based on Wakefield's own experiences as a teacher of workshops on spiritual autobiography and part anthology of some of the products of those workshops.

The Story of Your Life: Writing a Spiritual Autobiography, *by Dan Wakefield, Beacon, $12.95, 178 pp.*

There is, of course, a long and noble tradition of religious autobiography and a more recent trend in both studying and writing autobiography as part of the spiritual quest. I think it was James Olney, in a pioneering work on the theory of autobiography, who noted that every autobiography is both a theodicy implicitly (since it assumes an account of how one got from x to y in an ordered fashion), as well as being a fiction in the sense that in reflection we tend to pick and choose what is significant. Wakefield does not focus on theory but it is clear from his samples that his students do think of their lives as taking on a shaped whole, and it is also clear that their lives are fictive in that they tend to look at the blazemarks that brought them to the present.

This is a helpful book both for the techniques Wakefield has developed and for the dynamics of how these classes operate. I have sometimes used autobiographical essays in class with indifferent success, caused, perhaps, from my fear of being voyeuristic, and my incapacity to grade the results (do you give a student a "C" because his/her spiritual life is banal?). Wakefield's book might tempt me to try again.

Ignatius of Loyola: A Biography of the Founder of the Jesuits, *by Philip Caraman, S.J., Harper & Row, $22.95, 222 pp.*

Ignatius Loyola wrote (or, more precisely, dictated) an autobiography toward the end of his life. He has been the subject of a number of biographies but this new one can be highly recommended for its brisk and authoritative narrative line. It is the work of a distinguished English Jesuit who is the author of a number of important Jesuit works.

What is fascinating about the life of Ignatius is how he lived on the cusp of a number of sea changes in the religious life of the West. Born a year before Columbus set foot in the New World and converted in 1521, the year Luther's break with Rome became definitive, Ignatius drew on some medieval paradigms to express his newfound faith in Christ: the Christian Knight; the Hermit; the Pilgrim. Had he simply transformed those models he would be remembered as a kind of summation of medieval piety. The peculiar genius of Ignatius, however, was his ability to imagine a new kind of religious life that would look beyond Europe (as the early Jesuit missioners would demonstrate); that would embrace the Christian humanism of the day; and would rethink the older style of life found in monastery and priory (he fought mightily, for example, to avoid the obligation of the choral recitation of the Office for his company).

Philip Caraman traces out all those strands in this book while also giving us

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an intimate portrait of a person who was not only a great mystic and religious founder but an apostle of charity and social action. When he died, in 1556, his order was firmly established in the church and, consequent upon the close of the Council of Trent after his death, that same order's activities both in Europe and elsewhere would become almost synonymous with the militant baroque movement which we now call variously the "Counter-Reformation" or the "Catholic Reformation." Ignatius, I think, still deserves a great fat two-volume biography in English with long excursuses on everything from the roots of the *Exercises* to a more detailed description of his life in Rome. Until that biography comes along, we are well served by this shorter, but lovingly written, life of the saint.

Jim Forest, long-time peace activist, convert from Roman Catholicism to Russian Orthodoxy, and now resident in Holland, has traveled widely in the Soviet Union. This is his second book reporting on those travels. It is an attempt to give an account

Religion in the New Russia, *by Jim Forest, Crossroad, $17.95, 217 pp.*

of religious life there; no mean task given both the immensity of the region (there are eleven time zones) and the complexity of the religious life of peoples who are both European and Asiatic.

It should not surprise us, given his own commitments, that he should devote nearly a third of the book to the Orthodox church in the era of *glasnost*. Free from the somewhat starry-eyed enthusiasm that marred his *Pilgrim to the Russian Church* (1988), Forest is fair in describing the sad history of Orthodoxy in this century (it was persecuted into craven compliance to the Soviet state until recently), and the obvious signs of a chastened resurrection: churches are filled; monasteries reopened; publishing goes apace; and seminaries again receive candidates. Many Orthodox are wary of the rebirth of a Slavophile movement like *Pamyat* with its ugly message of xenophobia and anti-Semitism. Subsequent chapters give a rapid survey of the Roman Catholic church; the Uniates; the various forms of Protestantism (ranging from the Lutherans to the Adventists); the Russian Old Believers; Jews; Muslims; and Buddhists.

Forest's book is not a systematic treatment of the topic. It is rather an exercise in reportage by one who has traveled widely in the Soviet Union interviewing everyone from parish clergy, local rabbis, and mullahs to *apparatchiks* who work for the Council of Religious Affairs. Events are happening with such rapidity in the Soviet Union that it is probably premature to ask for works more systematic than the one that Forest has written. What he has given us is a quick Cook's Tour of religious life in that part of the world. He has a readable journalistic style, an eye for the sharply drawn vignette, and a passion for his subject. □

THE INSTITUTE AT BOSTON COLLEGE

Sail Into Historic Boston for the Summer of 1991 and Celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Institute July 21-27th

Two-Week Courses: June 24-August 2, 1991

- **Barbara Bowe** — Pastoral Introduction to the New Testament
- **Mary Boys** — Traditions of Religion and Education
- **Raymond Brown** — Special Anniversary Lectures: New Testament Christology
- **Joan Chittister** — Christian Spirituality and Contemporary Culture (6-9 p.m.)
- **Bernard Cooke** — Christology
- **Lawrence Cunningham** — Theology of Church
- **Jay Dolan** — American Catholics: Immigrant Roots and Contemporary Challenges
- **James Fowler** — Forming Personal and Public Faith
- **Thomas Groome** — Christian Ministry: Education for the Reign of God
- **Gustavo Gutierrez/Roger Haight** — Theology of Liberation/Approaches to Christ and Church in the Theology of Liberation (6-9 p.m.)
- **Walter Harrelson** — Introduction to the Old Testament
- **Maria Harris/Gabriel Moran** — Current Issues in Religious Education
- **Robert Imbelli** — Foundations of Theology
- **Robert Kennedy** — Liturgical Theology and Practice
- **Claire Lowery** — Integrative Colloquium: Theology and Pastoral Practice
- **John Meier** — The Gospel of Matthew
- **James O'Donohoe** — Fundamental Ethics
- **Michael St. Clair** — Introduction to Pastoral Counseling
- **David Tracy** — The Christian Doctrine of God

The following faculty will be teaching the week of the 20th Anniversary: Brown, Cooke, Fowler, Harris/Moran, Harrelson, Lowery and O'Donohoe.

Also available: Academic Year Degree and Non-Degree Programs (M.A., M.Ed., C.A.E.S., Ph.D.); Sabbatical Renewal Program; On-Campus Air Conditioned Apartments with Kitchen; Substantial Financial Aid for Degree Students.

For further information regarding all programs and the 20th Anniversary Celebration: Institute of Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry
Boston College, Department R
Chestnut Hill, MA 02167 (617) 552-8440

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 34)

arenas dominated by men and their aggressive political culture. Such women must operate in a manner that their male counterparts will understand. If world politics were dominated by women, so that women leaders were dealing with other women leaders, we would probably see a significant change in both style and substance in international relations.

DOROTHY DILLON

The writer is co-chair of the Foreign Policy Task Force of the Woman's National Democratic Club.

The fetus & the law

San Diego, Calif.

To the Editors: Three common justifications for current abortion policy have emerged:

1. The fetus, although human, is inconvenient (population explosion, or, less abstractly, this child will create personal problems for the mother, etc.) and might makes right. That seems the most honest approach. No pussyfooting around the fact that a human being shall die: violence is an integral part of life and history, and the weak are the first to be pushed from the lifeboat.

2. The fetus is subhuman (or not fully human, or less than human); and hence it is expendable without any more moral consequence than putting down a dog.

3. If the child is allowed to be born, it may not be loved or cared for. Since it will lead an unhappy life, better we should kill it now, and thus spare the suffering that lies ahead.

Nancy Amidei's credo, "...neither do I think a fetus is fully human from the moment of conception" ["Variant Views on Abortion," October 26, 1990] leads one to conclude she is happy to run with the second group, the mandarins who have the power—and the chutzpah—to define when someone is human or not for the purpose of deciding whether to take his or her life with impunity.

By defining the object of the knife, gun, gas chamber, out of the human race, one can liquidate him/her without qualm. One remembers Field Marshall Walter von Reichenau who defined the Jews as "subhuman" in his infamous order of the day. Other Nazi leaders coined the term "humanoid subspecies."

A problem for all these groups is that for decades our legal system had been pushing toward developing protections for the unborn. For example, Professor Prosser wrote [*Law of Torts*, third edition, 1964] that "an unborn child in the path of an automobile is as much a person in the street as the mother." A New York appellate court ruled that damages could be obtained for the child even if the injury was inflicted *before he or she was viable* [*Kelly v. Gregory*]. Some twenty-five years ago the New Jersey Supreme Court decided that the rights of an unborn child were violated by his mother's refusal, on religious grounds, to submit to a blood transfusion needed to preserve the lives of both the mother and her unborn child. Most states have statutes which grant the common law right of inheritance to an unborn child.

M.B.A. in CHURCH MANAGEMENT (18 months)

This program is designed specifically for the improvement and refinement of management and administrative skills necessary for ministry professionals—clergy, religious, laity—to better discharge their responsibilities in the management of church programs, personnel, and properties under ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Consisting of four one-week intensive study sessions for two consecutive years with inter-term directed readings and a management project, the M.B.A. program meets one week in August at the Mercy Center on Long Island Sound in Connecticut and one-week in January at the Lindenwood Conference Center in Indiana for two consecutive years. Total cost of room/board/tuition for the M.B.A. in Church Management is $5,000.00 ($1,250.00 per session). Program dates are August 19-23, 1991; Jan. 6-10, 1992; Aug. 3-7, 1992; Jan. 4-8, 1993. **Application deadline is May 15, 1991.** Admission requirements are a bachelor's degree and five years professional experience in ministry.

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAMS (30 months)

Pastoral Counseling This program is designed specifically for ministry professionals—clergy, religious, laity—who are primarily engaged in pastoral counseling in either parish or institutional settings. Four quarters of one-week each plus directed readings and a doctoral project are required. First and fourth quarters are at the Foundation and the second and third quarters are at one of our cooperating institutions (§). This program is tailored to maximize flexibility in timetable and geographic location. Requirements include a graduate degree and five years experience. First quarter is No. 11-15, 1991 and fourth quarter is March 21-25, 1994. Room/board/tuition for the Foundation's residence portion is $2,500.00. Cooperating institutions assess their own fees. Application deadline is June 1, 1991.

Applied Ministries This program is designed for ministry professionals—clergy, religious, laity—who wish maximum flexibility in study-time and study-location. Concentrations include Pastoral Care, Spirituality, Liturgy, Creative Arts, and Scripture. The study design is the same as for Pastoral Counseling—four quarters with first and fourth at the Foundation and second and third at one of our cooperating institutions (§). First quarter is Sept. 30-Oct. 4, 1991 and fourth quarter is April 25-29, 1994. Room/board/tuition for the Foundation's residence portion is $2,500.00. Cooperating institutions assess their own fees. Application deadline is June 1, 1991. Admission requirements include a graduate degree and five years experience.

§ Cooperating universities/seminaries are located in MA, NH, VT, IL, PA, NY, GA, TX, LA, CA, CO, NJ, RI, DC, Vancouver, Oxford, and Jerusalem. (List comes with application packet.)

GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION
P.O. Box 877, 52857 C.R. 21
Bristol, IN 45607 • 219/848-7920

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMING
The genius of Vaclav Havel

On the other hand, recent years have seen the genesis of a multitude who advocate that the most basic right of all, the right to life, should not be recognized, no matter how close to viability the fetus, no matter how flimsy the reason a mother has for terminating the life of her offspring.

It appears that we are creating a schizophrenic society: one which encourages the best minds and hearts to nurture and build on the common law development of the rights of the unborn, but one which at the same time allows compassion for the pregnant woman, or some less admirable motive, to cause the law to turn its back, to transform the unborn into a nonentity in legal terms, a "thing" to be trashed. VINCENT E. WHELAN

Another exegisis

Lake Tomahawk, Wis.

To the Editors: Paul Dinter's article about celibacy ["Disabled for the Kingdom," October 12, 1990] makes the valid point that the term "this" in "Let anyone accept this who can" refers to the indissolubility of marriage, the subject of Matthew 19:2-12, and not to celibacy, which is mentioned only in the last phrase of the preceding sentence.

However, I think he errs in his interpretation of celibacy as a disability. Although the use of the term "eunuch" does appear to imply sexual disability, it should be interpreted within the overall context of the discussion of the indissolubility of marriage, except in the case of adultery.

In the light of Paul's comparison of Jesus' relationship with the church with the husband/wife relationship, I suggest that the adulterous marriage is the marriage that is not like Jesus' relationship with the church, i.e., not loving, not supportive, not mutually valuing, not healing. Thus the involuntary eunuchs of the first two categories are those who because of the effect of nature and the environment have been emotionally disabled and cannot sustain a loving, valuing, supporting, healing relationship. The voluntary eunuchs who choose celibacy for the sake of the kingdom are listed in a separate category, implying that they are different from the disabled nature/nurture eunuchs. The fact that this category would include Jesus is evidence that this is the implication intended.

It seems to me that this passage tells us that marriage is a special calling which some are granted and some are not. Of those who are not, some are incapable of the calling and some have chosen another calling. And that is all the passage says. It does not address the question of a compulsory celibate priesthood or place a higher value on celibacy for the sake of the kingdom or rule out a married priesthood.

MARILYN M. KRAMER

'Family Pictures'

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Crystal Gromer's review of *Family Pictures* [October 12, 1990] seemed to me unduly harsh. Gromer did a sensitive, thoughtful analysis of the affairs of heart in the book, but nowhere granted the author a modicum of art. In this, I think, she erred. The book is huge and at times disconnected, but all in all I felt that author Sue Miller's evocations of the despair and the illuminations of an unhappy family piled detail upon detail to create a glowing mosaic of the "family picture." Not the usual graceful depiction of the family, but art just the same. SHEILA DeCOSSE

CLASSIFIED

RATES: 80¢ a word, one time; 76¢ three times; 72¢ six times; Classified payable with order; monthly in advance for more than three times. COMMONWEAL, 15 Dutch St., NYC 10038.

Executive Director Needed

Jesuit Volunteer Corps, a lay Catholic volunteer organization which places full-time volunteers to work among the poor, is seeking a new Executive Director. Competitive salary and benefits. Must begin work prior to June 1, 1991. Send resumé to search committee chair: Pat McManamon, Jesuit Provincial Office, 7303 W. Seven Mile Road, Detroit, MI 48221. Resumé due February 1, 1991. Please state salary requirements.

THE WORLD OF ISLAM

GOD IS ONE
The Way of Islam
By R. Marston Speight

Highlighting the common factors as well as the important issues of faith and life that divide us, *God Is One* confronts barriers to understanding the Islamic way with concern and accuracy. Includes examples of Islam's contributions to science, art, medicine, architecture and literature. 144 pp. $5.95

NEIGHBORS
Muslims in North America
Interviews by Elias D. Mallon

Neighbors shatters the stereotypes of fear and suspicion as Muslims in North America talk in lively interviews about their families, their work, and their spiritual journeys. 48 pp. $4.95

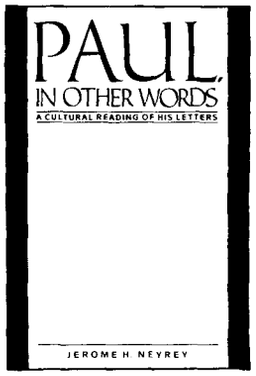
ONE GOD, TWO FAITHS
When Christians and Muslims Meet
A Study Guide on the World of Islam
By Sarah Klos

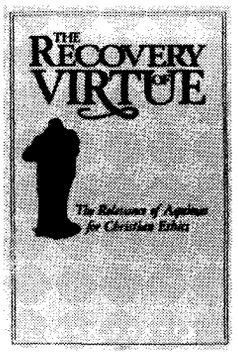
Six excellent sessions combine participatory activities, clear instructions and useful resources for adult and older youth study groups. 48 pp. $4.95

At bookstores, denominational supply houses, or directly from:
FRIENDSHIP PRESS
Distribution Office
P.O. Box 37844,
Cincinnati, OH 45222-0844
(513) 948-8733
Direct orders add $1 shipping per book.
Orders under $25 must be prepaid.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW ATTRACTIONS





The Recovery of Virtue
The Relevance of Aquinas for Christian Ethics
Jean Porter
By developing a philosophical reconstuction of the moral philosophy that underlies the Secunda Pars of the Summa Theologiae of Thomas Aquinas, Jean Porter illuminates Aquinas' theory of morality and shows its relevance to contemporary Christian ethics. "Porter is part of a new generation of Roman Catholic moral theologians and the future of the discipline is bright with people of her intelligence coming along."—Kenneth Himes, OFM, Washington Theological Union, Silver Spring, Maryland

Hard $24.95

Paul, in Other Words
A Cultural Reading of his Letters
Jerome H. Neyrey
"Recognizing paul in his proper cultural-historical context, Neyrey introduces the reader to critical access through a wholly convincing method of analysis. Paul comes alive in time and place. No Contemporary study of Paul can afford to neglect this book."—David M. Bossman, Professor, Jewish-Christian Studies, Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey, and Editor, Biblical Theological Bulletin

Hard $19.95

REVISED—
New Testament Apocrypha
Volume One: Gospels and Related Writings
Edited by Wilhelm Schneemelcher
English translation edited by R. McL. Wilson
"This English translation of the new and thoroughly revised fifth German edition of the extensive extra- canonical gospel literature is an absolutely indispensable collection of sources for every student of the New Testament and the history and literature of ancient Christianity."—Helmut Koester, John H. Morison Professor of New Testament Studies and Winn Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Harvard University, The Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Hard $29.95

Feminist Theology
A Reader
Edited by Ann Loades
This timely selection of readings represents the work of some of today's most influential writers of the Christian feminist movement. The book is organized in three parts: Biblical Tradition and Interpretation, Christian History and Tradition, and Practical Consequences. Contributors are: Karen Armstrong, Toni Craven, Mary Daly, Margaret A. Farley, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Daphne Hampson, Beverly Wildung Harrison, Ursula King, Genevieve Loyd, Sallie McFague, Eleanor McLaughlin, Sarah Maitland, Janet Morley, Ruth Page, Gail Ramshaw, Sharon Ringe, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Letty M. Russell, Nicola Slee, Phyllis Trible, Angela West, and Mary Wiesner

Paper $16.95

God's Power
Traditional Understandings and Contemporary Challenges
Anna Case-Winters
"For both process thought and feminism the classical way of understanding God's power has been offensive. Now at last we have a sustained and systematic statment of the objections to the classical view and a constructive statment that draws creativly from both the newer traditions."—John B. Cobb, Jr., Ingraham Professor of Theology at the School of Theology at Claremont, Claremont, California

Paper $19.95

At your bookstore or call toll free **1-800-227-2872**

WESTMINSTER/JOHN KNOX PRESS
100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED